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Collegiate Adventist Sabbath School Quarterly

January 7 — April 7
First Quarter 1979

LIVING THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

Inside:

- 1. God's Beautiful Character**
- 2. Changing Our Characters**
 - 3. The Love Motive**
 - 4. Working**
 - 5. Visions of Service**
 - 6. Caring**
- 7. What to Do With God's Gifts**
 - 8. Living With the Family**
 - 9. Educating Christians**
- 10. Worshipping Our Father**
 - 11. Communicating God**
- 12. Doing Things Like God Does**
 - 13. Finding Joy**

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Here it is! After ten months of labor, our "baby" is finally delivered. Beginning in March of 1978 with a one-week prototype of a college quarterly, the Lord has led step by step--and now has delivered.

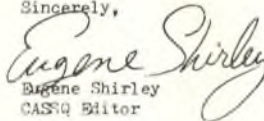
This quarterly is a unique concept. We've tried to focus it toward the college person, both student and instructor. By preparing a quarterly that views a theme from six different perspectives (illustration, Bible, spirit of prophecy, scientific, opinion, and how to articles), we hope to stimulate interest and thinking on spiritual issues.

Our deepest thanks to all who participated in producing this quarterly. Those listed on the preceding page spent hours working on the quarterly--and it could not have been produced without such dedication.

Most of all, we thank God for His direction in this project. I can look back on these past ten months and see specific areas where He has led. We therefore dedicate this issue of the Collegiate Adventist Sabbath School Quarterly to the glory of our God. It is our prayer that because of this quarterly, many college students will come to appreciate and love more and more the One who first loved them.

May the blessings of heaven baptize you each day you read in this quarterly.

Sincerely,


Eugene Shirley
CASSQ Editor

HOW TO USE THIS QUARTERLY:

1. Review the study questions at the end of each week's lesson so you know what basically to look for.
2. Read and think about each day's article—make notes about them, discuss them with your friends or study partners, perhaps even generate questions of your own.
3. Be prepared to answer the study questions in class—and to vigorously discuss the basic themes of the lesson.

GOD'S BEAUTIFUL CHARACTER

Objective: To present the beauty of the character of the Person we call God and to come into a love relationship with Him.

January 7 - 13

Editor: Rick Westermeyer



□ January 7
Sunday

God Leads a Pretty Sheltered Life

selected by Dr. H. Ward Hill

At the end of time, billions of people are scattered on a great plain before God's throne. Some of the groups near the front talk heatedly — not with cringing shame, but with belligerence. Imagine the scene:

"How can God judge us? How can He know about suffering?" snapped a bitter brunette. She jerked back a sleeve to reveal a tattooed number from a Nazi concentration camp. "We endured terror, beating, torture, death!"

In another group, a black

lowered his collar. "What about this?" he demanded, showing an ugly rope burn. "Lynched for no crime but being black! We have suffocated in slave ships, been wrenched from loved ones, toiled till only death gave release."

Heard across the plains were complaints against God for the evil and suffering He permitted in His world. God was lucky to live in heaven where all was sweetness and light, where there was no weeping, no fear, no hunger, no hatred. Indeed, what did

God know about what man had been forced to endure in this world? "After all, God leads a pretty sheltered life," they said.

Each group chose a representative — a Jew, a black, an "untouchable" from India, an illegitimate, a Japanese from Hiroshima, a Pakistani from a refugee camp, and a prisoner from Siberia — these being the ones who had suffered most. Meeting in the center of the plain they consulted with one another, preparing their argument. At last they were ready to step forward and present their case. It was rather simple — before God could be qualified to be their Judge, He must endure what they had endured. Their decision was "God should be sentenced to live on earth — as a man!"

Safeguards and standards were established forbidding God to use any of His divine powers. The standards consisted of:

1. Let Him be born a Jew.
2. Let the legitimacy of His birth be questioned, so that none will know His true father.
3. Let Him champion a cause so just, but so radical, that it brings down upon Him hate and condemnation.
4. Let Him try to communi-

cate God to men.

5. Let Him be betrayed by His closest friends.

6. Let Him be indicted on false charges, tried before a prejudiced jury, and convicted by a cowardly judge.

7. Let Him see what it is to be terribly alone and completely abandoned by every living thing.

8. Let Him be tortured, and let Him die! Let Him die the most humiliating death — the death on a cross between common thieves.

As each leader announced his portion of the sentence, loud murmurs of approval went up from the great throng of people. When the last had finished pronouncing his sentence, there was a long silence. No one uttered another word. No one moved. For suddenly all knew . . .

**GOD HAD ALREADY
SERVED HIS SENTENCE.**

This description prostrates what promises to be one of the most dramatic scenes in earth's history — when the human race finally realizes the full implications of God becoming a man. Why did He do it? How do we know and understand Him? This week we will use a number of approaches in exploring God and His character.

“ ‘If God is dead, then worship is madness.’ The problem of religious thinking is not only whether God is dead or alive, but also whether we are dead or alive to His realness. Biblical consciousness begins not with man’s but with God’s concern and that the supreme fact in the eyes of the prophets is the presence of God’s concern for man and the absence of man’s concern for God.” (Abraham J. Heschel, *God in Search of Man*, pp. 127-128).

In this section we will try to investigate a few Biblical texts that show us how God revealed His concern for His people. The Old Testament writers used a variety of descriptions to show the majesty and love of God.

- El Shadday** - God, the one of the mountain(s) (Gen. 49:25)
- El Elyon** - Most High, Exalted one (Gen. 14:18-20)
- El Olam** - God of Eternity, God everlasting (Gen. 21:33)
- YHWH (Yahweh)- I Am Who I Am** (Ex. 3:14)

Probably the best depiction of this majestic picture of God - the God of the mountain - can be found in Ex. 19:16-25; 24:16,17.

The God of the mountain

At the beginning of Israel’s history, we find that God wants to impress upon his people the absolute character of his sovereignty and majesty. This experience is supposed to impress itself in the national character and consciousness of the redeemed. This God of the mountain is not like the impersonal lawgiver of other nations but the creator of the natural forces. The mountain burned like a “kiln” and yet nothing was consumed. Moses walked into this divine fire and came back unhurt and his face shining like the sun (Ex. 34:30).

This Sinai experience is only the beginning of God’s revelation of His multifaceted character. During the long history of His people’s apostasy He shows Himself in a manner which has no equal in the religious history of any other nation. He reveals himself as the loving and forgiving Father of Israel.

The loving Father of Israel

Whenever they strayed from their true home He was calling for their return with the most tender words.

There is no other religious literature that can compare with the prophetic call of Isaiah. **“Comfort, comfort my people . . .”**

“Have no fear, for I have paid your ransom . . .” “Take heart, do not be afraid . . .” “I have swept away your sins like a dissolving mist, and your transgressions are dispersed like clouds; . . .” (Isaiah 40:1; 43:1; 44:8; 44:22 (NEB))

The most supreme revelation of God’s power, character and love is without doubt His revelation through Jesus, the Christ. The witness of the New Testament writers is very clear on this point: the life and death of Jesus is the ultimate revelation of God’s character.

God in human flesh

- Col. 2:9** For it is in Christ that the complete being of the Godhead dwells embodied. (NEB)
- 1:20** Through him God chose to reconcile the whole universe to himself, making peace through the shedding of his blood upon the cross.... (NEB)

(See also Rom. 3:24, 24; Hebr. 1:1-4; 10:12)

God was with man then, and He is with man now, still reaching out and showing His deep concern and love for His erring children.

TESTIMONY

Ellen G.
White

"Moses had a deep sense of the personal presence of God. He was not only looking down through the ages for Christ to be made manifest in the flesh, but he saw Christ in a special manner accompanying the children of Israel in all their travels. God was real to him, ever present in his thoughts. When misunderstood, when called upon to face danger and to bear insult for Christ's sake, he endured without retaliation. Moses believed in God as One whom he needed and who would help him because of his need. God was to him a present help.

God's
presence a
reality

"Much of the faith which we see is merely nominal; the real, trusting, persevering faith is rare. Moses realized in his own experience the promise that God will be a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. He had respect unto the recompense of the reward. Here is another point in regard to faith which we wish to study: God will reward the man of faith and obedience. If this faith is brought into the life experience, it will enable everyone who fears and loves God to endure trials. Moses was full of confidence in God because he had appropriating faith. He needed help, and he prayed for it, grasped it by faith, and wove into his experience the belief that God cared for him. He believed that God ruled his life in particular. He saw and acknowledged God in every detail of his life and felt that he was under the eye of the All-Seeing One, who weighs motives, who tries the heart. He looked to God and trusted in Him for strength to carry him uncorrupted through every form of temptation. He knew that a special work had been assigned to him, and he desired as far as possible to make that work thoroughly successful. But he knew that he could not do this without divine aid, for he had a perverse people to deal with. The presence of God was sufficient to carry him through the most trying situations in which a man could be placed.

Moses
trusted
God
completely

"Moses did not merely think of God; he saw Him. God was the constant vision before him; he never lost sight of His face. He saw Jesus as his Saviour, and he believed that the Saviour's merits would be imputed to him. This faith was to Moses no guesswork; it was a reality. This is the kind of faith we need — faith that will endure the test. Oh, how often we yield to temptation because we do not keep our eye upon Jesus! Our faith is not continuous because through self-indulgence, we sin, and then we cannot endure 'as seeing Him who is invisible.'

Moses
saw
God

"My brother, make Christ your daily, hourly Companion, and you will not complain that you have no faith. Contemplate Christ. View His character. Talk of Him. The less you exalt self, the more you will see in Jesus to exalt. God has a work for you to do. Keep the Lord ever before you. Brother and Sister, reach up higher and still higher for clearer views of the character of Christ. When Moses prayed, 'I beseech Thee, show me Thy glory,' the Lord did not rebuke him, but He granted his prayer. God declared to His servant: 'I will make all My goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee.' We keep apart from God, and this is why we do not see the revealings of His power." (5T, pp. 651-653)

EVIDENCE

Science,
History,
Philosophy

Where is God's power and sovereignty seen about us?

Nowadays, when much that was a mystery to our forefathers is now understood and accepted as commonplace by first-grade children, it might seem difficult to see God's power actually in operation. When primitive peoples see things in nature which they do not understand, they ascribe them to their gods. And so it is often with us. The believer in God will say that the beauty of flowers is an evidence of God's power. The evolutionist, however, points out that the shape and beauty of the flowers is merely an adaptive mechanism of the flower to attract pollinating insects.

Where is
God's
power?

The majesty of trees, huge waterfalls and mountains are often mentioned as other examples of the power of God. But big trees, others say, are merely an adaptation to the selective pressures of nature, and waterfalls and mountains are results of movements in the earth that uplift and change the surface of the earth.

And when we as Christians see rivers run wild and the earth move violently during earthquakes, it's hard for us to see this destruction as an evidence of the power and sovereignty of God. Sometimes it seems that God is not all that much in control. These thoughts become especially difficult as we see more and more how man can move his environment from one state to another. Searching for God in nature has led us in two directions. In one direction, where physical laws are made paramount — God is an absent landlord. In the other, God is in everything — resulting in a pantheistic view.

Where then is God and His Power? The answer is: Where He has always been. Events take place that demonstrate that He is still in control even though the enemy is ever present to distort and twist this evidence so that the signs of God's might are blurred.

Only
Christians
can see
God's
power

God is there for those who have eyes to see and ears to hear. Eyes and ears that have witnessed the power of God in their own lives testify that He has moved mountains of evil habits and changed them into green hills of gracious actions; He has channelled destructive rivers of passion into streams of living water; and He has mutated weeds of selfishness into the flowers of loving actions. Only these true Christians — those who know what God has done for them — can know the power of God around them. Only these can see that God is still in control.

OPINION

The high level meeting on Madison Avenue drew to a close as the immaculately dressed executives put away their Cross pens, closed their Gucci cases and adjusted their monogrammed Saks Fifth Avenue ties. There it was — a brand new “package” for the election of Senator Jameson. It would work. Other packages just like it had worked before. Control the entire public contact with the candidate — his ideas and his actions. Let the public know just what they want to know on every issue — tell the **right** public the **right** things.

After all, everybody is different. We've all got our own sets of values and opinions. So make the audience hear what they want to hear and you've sold the client to the public.

He won.

What about selling God? How does His PR program work? Does the heavenly marketing plan include the usual elements found in earthly plans?

Are we being duped? Are we being sold a package?

God faced these issues in the very beginning. He solved them very simply.

First of all, there is nothing to hide in describing God. There is only the reality of the human's inability to perceive anything beyond his own immediate needs. At any given moment I may be worried about my grades, my money, my next meal, or my next friend. So God's task was to make Himself always there — for anyone of those needs.

God is
always
there

Like candidate Jameson's PR experts, God uses all the communication techniques available. Only He goes one step further and uses environment in a way that they can't. In fact, this week's lessons give an excellent example of how God uses my state of mind, my individual set of needs, my background and humanness to make a special picture just for me of Himself.

Therefore, I may not only perceive God differently than you, but I may perceive Him differently now from the way I will see Him in 24 hours. He capitalizes on my creativity. Where Madison Avenue needs to bury it, God helps my creativity to grow. I'm going to imagine God the way I need God. And He'll be that way just for me.

God meets
my needs

Dr. Schroeder, in the first section of this week's lesson, wrote of God from his own scholarly perspective. He saw God as an historical reality through the eyes of the culture of the Bible times.

The second writer showed us God through the eyes of a warm, loving human writing in the last century. Ellen White had, of course, a special view of God. Nevertheless, Larry McGill showed us how she writes from the point of view of a real human with real needs.

The third writer, Dr. Tkachuck, shows us the scientist's God. We see questions and answers rising out of a concern with such things as power, design, and structure.

God matches His information input to our own information metabolism. He feeds us just the amount we can handle as well as matching the content to our needs.

God
controls

God's PR office really doesn't have a job. There is nothing to hide and God **is** what I need **when** I need Him. The ultimate Friend.

He has won in my life. Are you voting?

As Jesus came to the end of His ministry and prayed that magnificent prayer recorded in John 17, it is clear that one of His greatest concerns was that His followers have a clear understanding of the nature and character of God. "And this is eternal life, that they know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou has sent" (John 17:3). "Oh righteous Father, the world has not known thee . . ." (verse 25). Strange? Think of some of the dramatic lengths to which God had gone in order that people might know Him — the sanctuary service, His conversations with Moses, and perhaps most striking of all the experience and ministry of Jesus.

There is only one way we can know God: by knowing His Son. And knowing God is not like learning a math equation where it can be learned once and set aside for future reference. Knowing God requires a dynamic, on-going, vibrant fellowship with Jesus. Pascal, the famous French physicist and philosopher, put it this way, "There is a God-shaped vacuum in the heart of each man which cannot be satisfied by any created thing but only by God, the Creator, made known through Jesus Christ."

Below are four steps one may take to have a strong fellowship with God and fill that "God-shaped vacuum."

1. Pray throughout the day. In spite of all that we say and profess the sad truth is that Christians spend very little actual time each day in prayer. Why is this so? Is it because we don't understand our need? Ellen White tells us that "the darkness of the evil one encloses those who neglect to pray. The whispered temptations of the enemy entice them to sins; and it is all because they do not make use of the privileges that God has given them in the divine appointment of prayer" (Steps to Christ, pg. 94, 95).

Wesley G. Pippert, White House correspondent for United Press International, made this observation about President Carter, "he and his wife read scripture together each night. He prays frequently during the day — 'almost like breathing,' he once commented to me" (*Christianity Today*, November 3, 1978, page 17). How many of us are so close to our Father that praying comes as naturally as breathing?

2. Study the word. Building and maintaining friendships require blocks of time. Knowing God also requires time. Tracing particular themes through the Bible, reading and comparing different translations, concurrently reading the Bible and the Conflict of the Ages Series are all ways of digging into the word. If done daily, without compulsion or haste, the benefits are beyond measure.

3. Develop a "homiletical bias." Some preachers have the ability to see an illustration in everything that happens. We, too, should develop a sensitive awareness of the hand of God directing, shaping, guiding the full range of experiences we encounter each day.

4. Meditate. To one caught up in the mad rush of college life, the idea of setting aside fifteen or twenty minutes a day for quiet contemplation, seems ludicrous and impractical. Nevertheless it's vital to a growing relationship.

The result? Augustine said it best, "thou has made us for thyself, O God, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in Thee."

To Consider:

1. What are some statements that can intimidate you and make you feel insecure or small? Can this problem be solved by beholding God's character?
2. Can I really **know** God?
3. What evidence can I show a highly intelligent atheist to prove that God is all He claims to be?
4. If we're really sincere about knowing God, should we spend weeks fasting and praying, as did Moses and Jesus, until we feel prepared to face this world?
5. If God holds all power and longs to use it to help me, why don't I feel "helped" more often than I do?
6. What does it mean, Moses saw God? (see Tuesday's lesson)

CHANGING OUR CHARACTERS

Objective: To understand that man's response from knowing God is a change in character.

January 14 - 20
Editor: Teri Melancon



□ January 14
Sunday

Look At Him

by Dr. James Melancon

It really shouldn't have been that difficult. To look at all the thinking Allen was doing, you might have assumed that a political campaign planning session was in full swing. He carefully weighed the pros and cons: "If I am really friendly, won't the kids think I'm trying too hard? Then again, if I walk in, play it cool, don't flash my teeth, and keep a calm and dignified profile, they'll think I'm aloof."

It was Allen's first day at Rathbone College. Rathbone students were known for their

social standing, their affluence, and their high national test averages. In other words, they were society's finest. What should he do?

Allen's choice confronts all of us when we come to the crossroads and are faced with a decision about how we should relate to God. We can make Him our friend, or we can avoid Him. And the important thing is this: we've got to make the choice. If we don't choose to accept Him, God is not going to rearrange our brain circuitry so that we automatically love Him. He

doesn't work that way. God wants to be friends with us, but He must wait until we give Him the signal. We've got to trust Him, we've got to "flash our teeth," we've got to let him know we're interested.

Because of sin, we can't meet God face-to-face in an overt way. But we can have a close relationship with Him through Jesus Christ. Two texts bring home clearly the importance of Jesus Christ in our relationship with God. In Col. 1:19 it states, "For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;" and in Col. 2:9 it says, "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."

A person can experience a character transformation by looking **at** Jesus and **to** Jesus. God's desire is that men should become one with Him

through Jesus; that they become what God wanted them to be originally: people in close communion with their Creator.

Through observing God, one is changed. Recalling the experience when Peter betrayed Jesus, we are told in the Scriptures: "And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter . . ." Lk. 22:61. As Peter looked on Jesus, he was drawn to Him, he repented, and he experienced a character change.

Don't be afraid to look to Jesus. Don't hesitate to become close to Him. As Pilate said to the Jews, "... Behold the man!" Jn. 19:5. Behold Christ, let Him be your friend, and become not what people **think** you should be, but what God **wants** you to be.

No matter how confused, arrogant, or utterly depraved a human being is, once he comes into intimate contact with God, he is changed for the better. The Bible is filled with specific examples of individuals who, after living close to God, became sons and daughters of the Most High. Consider two of these examples — Moses and Naaman.

Moses: Reared in the magnificent court of the pharaohs, Moses had the opportunity to be ruler of much of the known world. We can imagine the young Moses as a prince who met obstacles with rash and decisive blows. Consider Moses' own memories of his early manhood: **"And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren. And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand"** (Exodus 2:11, 12).

Moses, feeling with his fellow Hebrews the threat of the Egyptians, could not be restrained from eliminating this cruel and unjust taskmaster. Hatred for these men had been building in his soul, and he decided to make vengeance his own.


But after forty years of close friendship with God — sharing the good times and the trials, each revealing himself to the other and holding a deep, warm love between them — Moses' character trend was reversed. **"Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth"** (Numbers 12:3). Thus, a murderer became the meekest man on earth after spending time with God.

Naaman: The story of Naaman's character and physical changes is written in II Kings 5:1. **"Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honourable, because by him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valour, but he was a leper."**

How pure do you imagine Naaman's character was? As "Chief of Staff" of the Syrian army, I can imagine him as a fierce, proud and boastful commander. Thus, I can imagine how upset Naaman must have been when **"Elisha send a messenger [instead of showing proper respect by coming himself] unto him, saying, Go and wash in [the muddy, dirty Hebrew river] Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean"** (II Kings 5:10).

But **"his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash and be clean? Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean"** (II Kings 5:13, 14).

When was Naaman's character changed? Certainly the Holy Spirit was working through his servants to cause him to disregard his pride and accept the prophet's suggestions. And yet, as his rotting flesh became as perfect and fresh as a newborn's, Naaman came face-to-face with the God of re-creation, and his heart was



changed. We find evidence for this in II Kings 5:15. **“And he returned to the man of God, and all his company, and came, and stood before him: and he said, Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel; now therefore, I pray thee, take a blessing of thy servant.”** Indeed, when Naaman trusted God’s word and was “baptized” in the Jordan, his spiritual character, just as his physical nature, was changed.

Reader, no matter who you are: if you’re a human, you’re in need of a character change. Come into close, intimate contact with God, and **He** will re-create you in the image of Himself.

TESTIMONY

Ellen G. White

“When one turns away from human imperfections to behold Jesus, a divine transformation takes place in the character. The spirit of Christ working upon the heart conforms it to His image.” *Positive Christian Living*, p. 218.

If you can recall what it is like to look fully at the sun — even for a moment — and then look away, you will remember that for a while the sun’s image appears in everything you see.

Jesus’
character
imprinted
on the
soul

This is the way it is when we behold Jesus. Afterwards, everything we look at reflects His image, and we can’t see or talk of anything else. His image is imprinted on our soul’s eye, and affects every portion of our daily life, softening and subduing our complete nature. By beholding we are conformed to the divine likeness of Christ.

Peter

A classic example of character transformation can be seen in one of Christ’s disciples. Peter was by nature impetuous and forward, and Satan had taken advantage of these characteristics to cause his downfall. However, after living and working with Christ for three years, Peter became converted and the transformation was evident. After the humiliation of his three open denials of his Lord, he repented, and because of this experience became more prepared than ever to lead in the organization of the church. “Before his fall, Peter was always speaking unadvisedly — always ready to correct others . . . before he had a clear comprehension of what he had to say. But the converted Peter was very different. **He retained his former fervor, but the grace of Christ regulated his zeal.**” *The Desire of Ages*, p. 812.

Judas

Another disciple of Christ’s, but one in whom this conversion did not take place, was Judas. “He (Jesus) had brought him close to Himself, within the inner circle of His chosen and trusted disciples. Day after day He had borne the pain of continual contact with that stubborn, suspicious, brooding spirit; . . . all this that no possible saving influence might be lacking to that imperiled soul!” *Education*, pp. 92-93. Judas had had every opportunity to change as did Peter, but because he always looked inwardly instead of at Christ, he remained unconverted. Since the spirit of Satan was in him, when he looked inwardly, he became more and more like the enemy instead of like Christ.

Center
your
thoughts
on Christ

“We cannot, then, center out thoughts upon self; it is no more we that live, but Christ that liveth in us, and He is the hope of glory. Self is dead, but Christ is a living Saviour.” *Messages to Young People*, p. 161.

EVIDENCE

Science,
History,
Philosophy

One of the most serious charges ever made against any church was made by God against the church of Laodicea. She was charged with the "crime" of deception. The church of Laodicea claimed that she was in perfect physical and spiritual health. This charge is too often seen only in the context of the organization and conveniently disregarded in its much more important meaning as a judgment on the individual church member — you and me. The message to Laodicea is telling us that we have not experienced the true conversion which results necessarily in a true commitment to God.

How does one know if his experience has been a true conversion? Is it possible for you to know that you have turned away completely from **the things of this world** and taken the path towards the **Kingdom of God**? Yes! we can surely know. Our goals in life are a very good indication of our state of mind. Jesus perceptively told His followers: "Store up treasure in heaven, where there is no moth and no rust to spoil it, no thieves to break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Mt. 6:20, 21 NEB).

The history of God's people is full of known and unknown heroes of commitment. Let us look at one outstanding example of a committed Christian — Augustine, Bishop of Hippo in North Africa.

Augustine was born about the middle of the 4th century A.D. Monica, his mother, was a dedicated Christian; his father was a pagan who converted very late in his life.

Augustine's mother early taught him her faith. But as it happens so often, the brilliant young man, when he entered the university, lost his faith. For the young man who studied the heights of ancient philosophy Christianity was too crude and unsophisticated. To fill the void of his soul he turned to the half pagan and half Christian religion of Manichaeism which seemed to be much more logical to the young student. During these student years he also acquired a mistress. His devout mother very much disapproved of this irregular relationship. Manichaeism taught him that there was nothing wrong with this relationship. It was only **natural** to follow the desires of his flesh. His salvation would not be influenced since it was spiritual.

But the seed that had been planted by his mother and the working of the Spirit of God came to fruition many years later after Augustine had become one of the greatest professors of his time. His conversion was not sudden. It took many years and hard work—of the mind and soul. For this intellectual conversion was a heartrending experience. Many treasured ideas which he had acquired through long study had to be discarded. But when he made his decision as a mature man in his early thirties to take his stand with God's people it became a commitment for life.

Augustine left the imperial city of Milan where he had become quite a celebrity as a professor and returned to North Africa to commit the rest of his life to the service of God. There, in his homeland, he soon became known as one of the intellectual and spiritual leaders of the Church.

Knowing that people like he were frequently forced to become bishops, he consciously avoided going to a town that recently lost its bishop. To his surprise, God had ways to overcome well-laid plans. When he visited a friend in the city of Hippo the church chose him to become one of their ministers. Shortly afterwards he

We can
know if
we have
been
changed

Augustine
adopts
paganism

Slow,
decided
conversion

was consecrated bishop of Hippo. Thus, he believed, God had made naught of all his plans.

**Becomes
spiritual
leader**

The new bishop of Hippo probably would have been forgotten by history if it had not been for his great intellectual gifts. The man who for many years had studied the learning of his time and had become an outstanding scholar in his own right now dedicated his talents completely to the cause of God's work as he saw it.

Augustine lived in a very crucial period in history. The North African church was divided by strife and the Roman empire faced the serious challenge of the German invasions. Augustine dedicated much of his time to heal the wounds that had been opened by the now almost 100-year-old Donatist controversy. With his gifts as a speaker and writer Augustine was able to convince many of the schismatics to rejoin the church.

**Unites
church**

Ultimately more important was his fight against the dangerous heresy of Pelagianism which had been spreading rapidly within the Church. Pelagianism was essentially denying righteousness by faith by advocating that man could earn his way into heaven. It was the bishop of Hippo who gave the Church the intellectual weapons to fight this heresy successfully.

**Defends
righteous-
ness by
faith**

Also in this grave period of the early 5th century (Rome, the eternal city, had just been sacked by the German Visigoth) he began to write his great masterpiece — *De Civitate Dei* (the City of God). In it he answered the pagan charge that the Christians were responsible for the disaster that had befallen Rome. Their crime was said to be deserting the gods of Rome who, authorities claimed, had now taken revenge. Augustine proved from history that this was nonsense. He also explained to Christians that whatever might befall Rome, the destiny of God's city (the Church) would not be affected by it. The Church would go on to its ultimate destination.

**Defender
of
Christian-
ity**

He told his fellow Christians that they belonged to a community of strangers (*civitas peregrina*) who live otherworldly in this world. Thus the bishop of the obscure city of Hippo prepared the Church for the disasters that struck the Western Roman Empire and the Church shortly after his death.

**Changed
to serve**

When Augustine died on August 28 in 430 A.D. he ended a fruitful life of unswerving commitment to the cause of God. After his conversion there was never any doubt in his mind where his treasure was. He used his abilities to the glorification of God and His Church as he understood them. He certainly said, wrote and did many things to which we have to object. Yet he followed the light available to him with unswerving integrity.

Examples of the past, as instructive as they might be, are secondary in regard to my own life: what will be the judgment of history on my life? Am I dedicated to the pursuit of values that can be eaten by time or will my values withstand the attack of time and remain forever? As a student do I prepare to be a successful professional or to be a dedicated fighter in the cause of God's people? Will I be willing to take a stand for right and truth, as I understand it, or will I be willing to bend to circumstances? What and where are my priorities? God counsels us to get the necessary remedy from Him to be ready when He knocks.

The question is this: "How does knowing God change your character?"

Paul, the apostle, speaks of this change in Romans 5:1-5 as the result of justification by faith. He says this change comes from the Holy Spirit, who pours God's love upon us. "More than that," he says in verses 3-5, "we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us."

To paraphrase: we hurt; this hurting gives us the ability to withstand other hurt; this ability produces a strong character; and a strong character gives us hope. Hope does not "let us down," because God's love has been poured upon us by the Holy Spirit, which Jesus sent us in full measure, after His ascension. The Spirit makes itself known in each of our lives.

But what are the actual changes brought about by the Spirit?

They're listed in the following text, and you've read them or heard them many times before. This time, though, **stop** after each word. **Think** about each word, and see if you can mentally apply each term to your own life. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such there is no law."

Think to yourself: "Am I **always** loving — loving in my thoughts, in the words I say to my friends and about my friends? Am I always **joyful** — so confident in God's love and promises that I'm always elated? Am I **peaceful** — and a peacemaker — or do I constantly start arguments and disputes when there's little or no need for them? And so on down the list.

The question is this: "How does knowing God change your character?" And the answer is: **by teaching you in the classroom of daily trials to allow the Holy Spirit to produce within you the harvest of spiritual fruits.**

Daily trials produce character change

Fruits of character change

A close relationship that changes your personality? Sounds like a pretty serious relationship! How many of us know people whom we can trust to mold our characters for the better? Do we trust **anybody** that much?

Probably not. You may have had “heroes” or “heroines” when you were younger, but now their perfections have probably been shot full of holes, and you realize that they’re human and that nobody’s perfect.

Thank Heaven (literally!) we don’t have to feel this way about God. He’s perfect; He never changes; and He’s anxious to come close to us and help us develop seasoned, shining personalities which will last us through billions of years!

But if we expect a character change from God, we must get to know Him. We may think that for some this is easier than for others; yet there are some basic steps that we should all take to get better acquainted with our Creator — and thus be in a position to be changed by Him.

1. Treat God like you do your best friend. You like to be around close friends because they make you feel at ease. In Job 22:21 the Bible says, “Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee.” The Bible is clear — if we become close to God, the same good and peace will be ours that we enjoy when we’re with someone we trust, only more!

2. Talk things over with God. When you have a close friend you talk to each other as much as possible about plans, hopes and problems, and God is even closer than our human friends. Keep the conversation going. How is this done? By prayer, obviously. “Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice.” Ps. 55:17. The Psalmist David had the right idea. He turned to God at every opportunity for advice and help, as he would to a close friend.

3. Think about godly things — like the spiritual fruits discussed in the “Opinion” Section.

“If commonplace thoughts and affairs take up the attention, the man will be commonplace. If he is too negligent to obtain anything but a superficial understanding of God’s truth, he will not receive the rich blessings. . . . It is a law of the mind, that it will narrow or expand to the dimensions of the things with which it becomes familiar.” (Messages to Young People, p. 262).

We can’t be strong in character if we are loners when it comes to being close to God, the Molder of character. There is a positive need of keeping close to Jesus. He is our strength and power.

A change in character is not an overnight occurrence. We can’t merely throw ourselves on God and say, “O.K. Lord, here I am, do something.” We must work **with** God.

“A noble all-around character is not inherited. It does not come to us by accident. A noble character is earned by individual effort through the merits and grace of Christ.” (p. 99.)

Well, now you have the blueprint. You have to know much more than God’s name in order to really KNOW Him. Trust Him — He won’t hurt you. All that can happen to you is a change in spirit and purpose as you grow strong in your relationship with Him.

To Consider:

1. When Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were asked to kneel down to the idols, they could have knelt down, but secretly worshipped God.
What specific change had been made in their characters so that they did not do this?
2. If I don't feel like serving, have I really been changed?
3. What does it mean to think and act as a child of God?
4. Do you think Augustine, mentioned in Wednesday's lesson, really experienced true conversion? How could he have continued in his erroneous beliefs if he did have a conversion?
5. Does man keep sinning after conversion? To what degree? Why?

THE LOVE MOTIVE

Objective: To examine closely and evaluate the motives of our behavior and to move the love motive to the top of the list.

January 21 — 27
Editor: Ingrid Jonan



□ January 21
Sunday

Becoming Loving

by Mike Fellows

All those who accept Jesus in their lives who believe that He is their Saviour become different. They become God's little children and as they begin to love their new Father they begin, also, to love all of God's other children. There is a way that we can know that we are really LOVING and not just wanting people for selfish reasons. That is if we love God

and if we keep His commandments. Because that is what true LOVE is. God's love And His commandments show us that love. Here is the REALLY GOOD NEWS that is, if we are God's children, if we accept Him like a new Father, and if we understand that He saves us, then we can know absolutely that nothing is too hard for us. We can conquer anything overcome anything stop anything, or

begin anything.
And it is our trust
in our
New Father,
our understanding
that He is bigger than anything
and that He gives us His
strength,
our realization that He is really
with us
and loves us,
that gives us
VICTORY.
Look around you.
Who are the ones who have
really
been able
to live a DIFFERENT
life?
Not just to be different
but successful in living a fulfilled
life
a Happy life
THE LIFE THAT JESUS CHRIST
CREATED FOR
ALL HIS LITTLE CHILDREN.
Who is it who is able to live this
life?
The person who knows that
Jesus
is the Son of God.
That person who understands
entirely

what that means.
The person who has confidence
in
HIM, and who knows that
His blood is the only thing that
makes us
Good.
That person is a
HAPPY, SUCCESSFUL, DIFFER-
ENT
CHRISTIAN!
This is how confident we can be
in Him.
We can be so confident
that we can know that
anything
that we want and that He wants
for us
He can give us
And we can know that if we ask
Him
He always hears us.
He's always there
always listening.
Now if we can have confidence
that He hears us,
and know that He
LOVES US
we easily can have confidence
that He will give us
EVERYTHING WE NEED
if we ask
HIM.

Christ says, **“A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another” (John 13:34).** Here is a commandment to love, and we must obey if we profess to be followers of Christ. Our attitude toward this command is of supreme importance. We could respond “mechanically,” that is, responding without emotion. The rich young ruler probably approached his humanitarian obligations in this way.

“And, behold, one came in and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?” Jesus said . . . if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments . . . Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself” (Matt. 19:16-19). The young man’s response was that he had done all these things for years. But Jesus said, **“if thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me” (Matt. 19:21).**

Mechanical
love

This young man was willing to pay his 10% tithe, 3% for building fund, 3% for church expense, \$2.50 per month for missions, \$25.00 for Ingathering (he was too busy to talk to people door to door), and once in a while attend a church work bee. These are the right things to do. He fulfilled his obligation. But he was unwilling to give 100%; he was unwilling to really love. His giving was superficial; he was fulfilling an obligation, not giving from his heart.

What shows Christ’s people to be different from others? **“By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another” (John 13:35).** When our love is a natural response from the heart, without regard for selfish interests, then we have evidence of the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Christ could have said “love one another” a million times and not made much impact; but He not only talked about love, He showed it! “I love you” is just another phrase — unless that love is demonstrated. Here’s how Jesus showed His love:

Natural,
responsive
love

“But Jesus turned him about, and when He saw her, He said, ‘Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole.’ And the woman was made whole from that hour.” (Matt. 9:22)

“Then saith He to the man, ‘Stretch forth thine hand.’ And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other.” (Matt. 12:13)

How Jesus
loved

“Then Jesus called his disciples unto Him, and said, ‘I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way.’” (Matt. 15:32)

“Then said Jesus, ‘Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.’” (Luke 23:24)

Is it possible to love God, but not love one another?
“If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also” (I John 4:20, 21). “If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.” (I John 4:12)

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Y**

**Ellen G.
White**

Economic Theory states that individuals choose those options which seem to them most likely to secure their largest net advantage. This is a major motive in our human behavior: the motive to be selfish. Other options are available, however, and these options come from God.

“With Christ [God] gave all the resources of heaven, that nothing might be wanting in the plan for man’s uplifting. Here is love — the contemplation of which should fill the soul with inexpressible gratitude! Oh, what love, what matchless love! The contemplation of this love will cleanse the soul from all selfishness. It will lead the disciple to deny self, take up the cross, and follow the Redeemer.” CH 222-223

When love directs us, we receive innumerable blessings. As children we were so thankful when we were given gifts. How much more now should we be filled with gratitude at the gifts Jesus gives. “Let the precious blessings of God awaken gratitude in you. You cannot number the blessings of God, the constant loving-kindnesses expressed to you, for they are as numerous as the refreshing drops of rain. Clouds of mercy are hanging over you and ready to drop upon you. If you will appreciate the valuable gift of salvation, you will be guided in the way of peace . . .” MYP 409-410

“A thorough-going Christian draws his motives of action from his deep heart-love for his Master. Up through the roots of his affection of Christ springs an unselfish interest in his brethren. Love imparts to its possessor grace, propriety, and comeliness of deportment. It illuminates the countenance and subdues the voice; it refines and elevates the entire being.” GW 123

“Imbued with the love of Christ, you are to be constrained to perform acts of unselfish service until such acts become your life practice. Daily growth into the life of Christ creates in the soul a heaven of peace; in such a life there is continual fruit bearing.” CH 633

“If we love God because He first loved us, we shall love all for whom Christ died . . . Connected with Christ, we are connected with out fellow men by the golden links of the chain of love. Then the pity and compassion of Christ will be manifest in our life.” COL 384-385

All right, let’s say you love Christ, and are filled with gratitude toward Him. What now?

“‘We love Him, because He first loved us.’ In the heart renewed by divine grace, love is the ruling principle of action. It modifies the character, governs the impulses, controls the passion, and ennobles the affections. This love, cherished in the soul, sweetens the life and sheds a refining influence all around.” AA 551

Will you choose love as your number-one motive?

**God’s love
is matchless
love**

**We love
because
He loves**

EVIDENCE

Science,
History,
Philosophy

The towering cost of recovering lost health has forced doctors, nurses, and other health professionals to examine the task of **educating people to adopt life-styles aimed at wellness.** Many have been the studies and programs designed to educate for better living. But most experiments in health education are uncovering the sad fact that knowledge of good health practices does not insure changed behavior.

The unfulfilled promise of teaching better life-styles is apparent in such studies as those of Cohen and Cohen.¹ They wanted to find out if such training programs work, so they reviewed all of the empirical studies reported in eleven major health-education journals during the three-year period 1975-77. **Only 7 per cent** demonstrated that they were doing any real good and were causing overall major improvements in those being trained. Obviously, **knowing and doing** are two different things.

Despite recent extensive health education campaigns to alter smoking, driving, leisure, eating and drug habits, **none have produced any notable successes.**² An example familiar to many of us is the war against obesity. The dieter who **does** lose weight is faced with a 90% chance of gaining it all back. All of the programs for weight control apparently fail in the end, for most people.

Could this be because these efforts at changing living patterns neglect to take into account a basic problem of man—his degenerate condition? If education and knowledge do not bear fruits of reform, what will?

Mrs. White says that “love and trust in God” is **the** most important of her eight familiar rules for maintaining good health. Love for God, which is born of His Spirit, brings with it a change in character and will, generating the power to change the life-style. **All of the human programs aimed at man’s elevation are inadequate. In Christ has been provided the only way for the regeneration of fallen man.**

The public eye is on this issue of “education for wellness.” The arena is open for those who can bring forth a workable plan to contest against the destructive habits which are robbing our society of health and wealth. The Adventist college student has a clear challenge: **Look to Christ for divine power to effect reform in his life, and then lift the Savior so the world can look, and love, and live.**

References:

(1) Cohen C.,Cohen E: Health education: panacea, pernicious, or pointless? Presented at the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Washington, D.C. February 12-17, 1978.

(2) Cohen, E: A study of the effects of several educational techniques on junior high school students' knowledge and intended behavior toward a new concern in health education (doctoral dissertation) New York University, 1978.

“Knowing and doing are two different things”

In Christ is reforming power

Love is not an obedient response — you can't force somebody to love you, and you can't will yourself to love someone. Love is the result of more than the exercise of the will. I cannot love by merely deciding to love. Love is not something that man can produce. As a motive, it evolves out of a revelation that is understood and appreciated. Love in man is not a cause, but rather the effect of something, namely a relationship with Christ. It takes more than a mere **portion** of man, such as his will, to have love as the motivating factor for his action. It takes the involvement of man as a **total** being — his intellect, his emotions, his will, etc., all in relationship to and in the possession of the indwelling Christ. Christ did not expect the rich young ruler to become loving by merely selling his property, but rather by selling, or giving, all of **himself** to Christ. This giving of himself would requisite a relationship of trust and confidence. In exchange for that act, Christ would have come into his life with the kind of love that could have motivated him to also give away, or sell, his property. Or at least, he would be willing to do so if that were asked of him. Even then, it would not be man's love, but Christ's love in man that would be the motivating force.

Love is a response

Pure Motives

Do our motives have to be pure before God accepts our actions? What are pure motives like? God invites us to come as we are, and He promises to do the work of purifying our motives by His indwelling Spirit. We should have the ideal clearly in mind — total selflessness. Yet, at the same time, we should realize that the idea may not be a reality until His second coming. Man is a very complicated being; selfishness seems to be attached to every part of his being. Many Christians want to serve the Lord because this will result in eternal life. They want to trust God because of some of the benefits that come in return. They want to go to heaven because they will finally receive the peace that they have been hoping for. God accepts this limited understanding, and promises to go beyond their abilities to accomplish what they cannot accomplish by themselves.

God covers impure love

Difference between Christians and non-Christians

There are many good people in the world. They are kind, gracious, and well-mannered, at times more so than some professing Christians. However, we are not to confuse refinement of behavior with true love. I may be able to train and educate a dog, or a cat, to produce a certain kind of behavior. However, I cannot train them to love, because only Christ can instill love. Many good people will be lost at Christ's coming, not because they were not good enough, but because they did not have Christ and His love as the motivating factor in their lives.

Called to the highest form of love

HOW TO

Love. The word conjures up a wide variety of images, depending on the experiences we have had in life. We love that new 'Vette, or that pizza, or that new guy on campus, or our moms, or the flag, or the church (and the list goes on). We talk about love easily. We are bombarded with it in TV commercials and programs; it is the subject of most of the songs we hear; the preacher talks about it.

Love surrounds us, and yet few of us manage it very well on a day-to-day basis. We are convinced of our need for it. We go to great lengths to acquire it. We're painfully unhappy without it. The lack of it causes someone to drop out of school nearly every week. Most of us want to give it to someone or something. But, while it is easy to take love, and it would seem that it would be easy enough, almost automatic, to give love, few of us find it all that easy once we are involved in the process.

One need only be around a small baby for a while to realize this. God has put within each human the strong will to survive. The baby manifests that will by demanding attention whenever he needs feeding, changing, or affection. Little by little he learns to respond to those who care for him, and in time he learns to love.

But it is a lifelong struggle to learn to love in a mature fashion.

Mature love does not consider that which is to be gained, but seeks rather to give. We love easily those who look good, smell good, and who like all the right things or who are liked by all the right people. Others are not so easy to love. And yet, Jesus says, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you." (John 13:34). How is this to be done?

1. First, we need to examine our motives. Even the purest of our motives may reveal flaws when held up to close scrutiny. Most, if not all of us, engage in behaviors because of the "pay-offs" those behaviors have. We think well of ourselves, or others think well of us, or we receive some other kind of gratification.

2. We need to rethink what love actually is. True love can be revealed only in the light of Calvary. Everything else is a counterfeit. "If we love God because He first loved us, we shall love all for whom Christ died . . . *Counsels on Health*, p. 633.

3. Then we will want to practice love. Rather than seek out only those who look good, smell good, and who are popular, we will seek out those who most need our love. "Imbued with the love of Christ, you are to be constrained to perform acts of **unselfish service** until such acts become your life practice. *Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 384-385.

Love for our fellowman and love for God must be practiced until it becomes as natural as drawing another breath. Love, then, will still have its payoffs, but, in addition, it will be love that is wholly acceptable to God. "This love, cherished in the soul, sweetens the life and sheds a refining influence on all around." *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 551.

To Consider:

1. How can we be sure that our motives for following Christ are pure?
2. Must they **all** be pure before we do the appropriate action?
3. How can the word “pure” be defined in this case?
4. Can a person who has not knowingly accepted Christ as his Saviour be capable of expressing true godly love? Is genuine affection limited only to Christians? Explain your answer.
5. Have you ever seen anyone totally changed from a hater to a lover by the message of the gospel?

WORKING

Objective: To emphasize that work is a blessing and privilege and that our attitude toward our work is important to God.

January 28 - February 3

Editor: Ruth Sales



□ January 28
Sunday

Retirement vs. Paradise

by Gary Wisbey

After the success of his first book, *The Onion Field*, Joseph Wambaugh quit his job on the police force and began writing full time.

Joe had planned for, and dreamed of, an early retirement during his fourteen years as a cop. He had "moonlighted" to write *The Onion Field* while still working his beat. After writing *The Blue Knight*, *The Centurion*, and *The Chain Boys*, his dream of an early retirement was possible.

At 38 years of age he spotted his retirement estate. He has never completely des-

cribed his home or its location publicly, but from what he has revealed, we can envision it as a brick and cedar California ranch style mansion, sprawling on a hillside at the end of a tree lined private lane. The home is surrounded by formal gardens, a pool, servant's quarters, and guest cottages. Inside are exotically appointed rooms. It appears to be a perfect place to spend a life of ease for the jet-setting retired author. But Wambaugh has lived on this estate little more than four years.

On November 26, 1978,

Illustration cont.

Wambaugh recounted on the "Tonight Show" the story of those four years of retirement in approximately these words: "I retired at age 38. I had all the money I needed to retire for the rest of my life. However, I grew so bored that my butler and I often played one-on-one basketball in the living room of my house. After four years of that, I just **had** to go back to work. Now I am risking my entire fortune to independently produce my first movie, "The Onion Field." If it fails, I'll have to find another job and start completely over.

A life of retirement — of no work — brought not happiness and fulfillment to Wambaugh, but boredom. Wambaugh thought it was worth risking everything for the privilege of work. Does it seem possible that anyone would give up a life of pure "fun" for one of hard work and high risk? Wambaugh apparently makes this concept possible.

Statistics released by the U.S. government in October of 1978 show that men forced to retire — who have in general worked hard and saved as much as possible — live an average of not more than three years following retirement. The implication of the report was that for people physically and mentally capable of work, such activity is essential to sustaining physical life. Startling isn't it? Certainly Joseph Wambaugh learned that work is essential to happiness — even to life.

That work is essential to life and happiness, however, is not a widely accepted maxim. As Christians we should have known its truth all along. The first Biblical statement of this principle is found in Genesis 2:15. Here it is recorded that "The Lord God took the man [Adam] and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it." In one short sentence, the Lord dashes our dreams of the idyllic life. Even in paradise, man must work.

God works

To a majority of people the thought of work brings a very unpleasant taste to their mouths. Some children — and adults — expend more energy trying to escape from work than what is needed to do the work in the first place, and they rejoice when Friday comes — the TGIF syndrome. High on the list of human grievances is job dissatisfaction. Was work actually one of the curses given to man when he fell?

I don't think we can call work, as such, a curse. After all, God works. **"Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work. . ."** (Gen. 2:1, 2.)

And I don't think we can say that, just because God can speak and create objects with His voice if He wants to, that's what always happened. Notice Psalms 8:3 (David is talking to God): **"When I consider the heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars . . ."** God evidently just loves to get His fingers into His creation — and He formed man in this same way.

All work is important

I think that God makes no distinction between the various types of human labor. Whether a man digs a trench or preaches a sermon doesn't make any difference. It's all service — the trench may carry electricity through wires to light the pulpit of the minister. In the parable of the talents, the master rewarded the most faithful workers: **"because thou has been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities."** (Luke 19:17)

Proverbs praises the "working woman" — the efficient, business-minded housekeeper: **"She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands . . . with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard . . . she looketh well to the ways of her household."** (Prov. 31:13, 16, 27). **"Her children arise up and call her blessed; her husband also . . ."** (Prov. 31:28)

Work is a blessing

Work — efficient service to others — is indeed a blessing. It makes a theological statement: "Since God is doing everything He can to restore this world to its original state, I too in my work will restore all that I can in order to increase the quality of life of those who surround me." We should study, as Paul puts it, **"to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed,"** in our secular as well as religious labor. (2 Tim. 2:15)

"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Eph. 2:10). Work is simply service to mankind.

TESTIMONY

Ellen G.
White

Synergism. Sounds like one of those head-whirling scientific terms which needs a page or so of equations to explain. Actually, it's easily defined: The cooperative action of two discrete (different and separate) agencies so that the total effect is greater than the sum of the two parts."

Synergism as an effect has been observed by modern man in many technological situations. It is a reality in some aspects of diet, in certain chemical processes as well as in electronics. But can it apply, for example, when you combine good old-fashioned **work** and **studies**? Can the combination of the two be greater than the sum of the two parts? And, for that matter, can synergism as an effect be found in one's spiritual life?

In this section of the lesson, we are looking carefully at what the Lord's messenger to the twentieth century has to say about work. She says a lot, in fact. For example, in the book *Fundamentals of Christian Education* there are several interesting lines which point toward a principle or "work."

For the student: "There should be rules regulating studies to certain hours, and then a portion of the time should be spent in physical labor."

For the rich: "The wealthy are also to work and learn how to earn a livelihood."

But there are certain realities involved in modern twentieth century life. As a student, you get depressed when you can't find time to do all the many important things. If you've got to add a major work program to your already glutted schedule . . . what then? Where do you find priorities?

For the swamped, Mrs. White has this advice: "Unite physical with mental labor." And, "If one must be neglected, let it be the study of books."

"But I'm goal oriented," you say, I don't have time to separate myself from the things I need to do in order to get where I'm going. Besides, I need that extra time for my devotional life."

Ellen White is firm on this point:

"Every institution of learning should make provision for the study and practice of agriculture and the mechanic arts. Competent teachers should be employed to instruct the youth in the various industrial pursuits, as well as in the several branches of study. While a part of each day is devoted to mental improvement, let a stated portion be given to physical labor, and a suitable time to devotional exercises."

(In other words, **all** things are important — don't overload your circuits with one or two areas while excluding others.)

Here's another comment you've probably made: "I never have enough energy to do all the things I need to do. In fact I often feel like quitting school."

For the tired: these inspired comments:

"The human body may be compared to nicely adjusted machinery, which needs care to keep it in running order. One part should not be subjected to constant wear and pressure, while another part is rusting from inaction. While the mind is tasked, the muscles also should have their proportion of exercise."

As you can see, the "grand old lady" was quite directive about the importance of work. But what about the issue we raised at the

Testimony cont.

beginning? Can plain old work be a synergistic process, combining with studies for extra benefits? Here's what Ellen White says:

"By connecting labor with schools . . . students . . . will be able to accomplish more mental labor in a given time than they could by study alone."

What do you think? Can one's spiritual life become **synergistic** in any way? Is it possible to get more out than one puts into it?

(Ellen White quotations from *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, between pages 20 and 75.)

EVIDENCE

Science,
History,
Philosophy

It is interesting to note that as the compulsory retirement age of 65 began to be enforced in the United States, many people who were required to retire seemed to lose all interest in life, and often died rather quickly after retirement, whereas they had enjoyed excellent health up to that time. We're realizing more and more that work provides structure and gives meaning in a way that no other human activity can.

Work gives meaning ...

Not only that, but work plays a big part in how we feel about ourselves. "Job satisfaction" (your **happiness** with your work) is very significant in the adequate development of a self image — the way we look at ourselves and **value** ourselves.

Satisfaction...

Nathanael Brandon, on p. 127 of his book *The Psychology of Self-esteem*, says, "In analyzing the psychology of self-esteem one of the most important aspects to consider is the relationship of self-esteem to productive work and more broadly to the growth and exercise of man's mental abilities." He goes on to point out that productive work, when it's related to the way man manipulates his environment, is the most significant element in self-esteem.

Self-esteem

A little later, in the section of "Self-Esteem and Pleasure Seeking," he points out that there are basically five inter-connective areas that allow man to experience the enjoyment of life. Among these five he lists productive work, human relationships, recreation, art, and sex. However, he says, "Productive work is the fundamental area. Productive work is essential to man's sense of efficacy and thus is essential to his ability fully to enjoy the other values of his existence." (p. 133)

Work is fundamental

It is true that, as a result of the industrial and technological revolutions, the way man looks at himself in relation to his employment has been greatly altered by the general move from agriculture production to the production of things. But even in the technological society we still value ourselves mostly in relation to our ability to satisfactorily carry forward the type of work we've chosen as our "job."

We often speak of the Protestant "work ethic," and the fact that man has very closely related productive work to survival. We've all heard statements like: "by the sweat of a man's brow he earns his bread," and so forth. These are accepted as truisms within our society, and they're probably sensible ideas.

The "profit" motive is another idea we've accepted as a worthy one — a good employer is one who can make a profit upon the productive potential of his own executive abilities and the work of his employees.

All of these factors are ones we need to consider as we think about the blessings of work. In short, we value ourselves in relation to our ability to satisfactorily complete a work assignment.

Work defines value

(Nathaniel Brandon, *The Psychology of Self-Esteem*, Bantam Books, Inc., 1969)

- Editor:** *Mr. Harder, why don't you briefly introduce this topic — the blessings and privilege of work — to start off this interview?*
- Harder:** Well, as I have reviewed the lesson this week, it seems that two aspects of work have been considered. The first was the physical, "sweat of the brow" meaning of the word. This meaning is somewhat foreign to us in the white collar generation because machines now do most of this kind of work. But it was the most common meaning for former generations who worked long, hard hours to grow enough food to survive in what to them was a hostile world. The second concept is very modern; it considers work as any satisfaction — or happiness — increasing activity — those activities which are not directly required for survival and may not even be physically demanding.
- Editor:** *In the statements we read this week from *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, Mrs. White is talking to students and administrators of schools. She refers to "physical labor," "agriculture and the mechanic arts," and "industrial pursuits." She doesn't mention the value of such labor merely because she is so concerned with "earning a livelihood" — these physical activities are mentioned here for "the wealthy!" Does this counsel still apply?*
- Harder:** She is concerned — in an age with few gymnasiums, indoor swimming pools and racquet clubs — that students do not overlook physical exercise. Students, she said, should be developing physical skills along with their mental and spiritual labor. These physical skills should include more than team sports because individuals should enjoy staying with these activities after leaving the school environment. Thus the synergistic idea that:
- "the human body may be compared to nicely adjusted machinery, which needs care to keep it in running order." Keep the "machinery" in running order and the mental and spiritual endeavors will be more successful. This is what Ellen White was emphasizing.
- Editor:** *On this earth, man has known work simply as an attempt to survive. How do you compare this to the idea that we will work in heaven?*
- Harder:** We understand Heaven to be a place where our survival is assured and time will be spent in the pleasant aspects of living. Today, then, we can understand Heaven better because new occupations exist for the first time that create beauty, increase knowledge, and explore new frontiers. Today's occupations are also psychologically rewarding, often monetarily rewarding and probably most like what we will do in the new earth. After all, creation of happiness is what God is all about.

HOW TO

A graduation speaker at a public university once said, "If there is anything wrong with America today, hard work is not the cause of it." Two things came out of that statement. 1) Hard work had made America the great country it is and 2) since an organization is a reflection of its people, hard work has certainly not hurt the individuals that make up the great organization we call America.

If work is good for you — as this speaker implies and as the Bible indicated in "Go to the ant . . ." — it behooves us not only to learn to work, but to learn to enjoy our work.

Perhaps you may find your work boring and unfulfilling drudgery. If so, there is probably no reason for it to remain that way. Follow the suggestions below and perhaps they will help you to enjoy your work.

1. Choose the type of work that you will enjoy. You don't know what work you will enjoy? Well, remember, God has a plan for your life. Through prayer, find out what He would have you do and start working toward that goal as soon as possible. I don't mean that you should rush into your lifework, however. Maturation is an aid to your success.

Education can also contribute to success. Educate yourself for your work. But don't let your learning stop there — educate yourself further **while** you work.

2. Don't get upset if you're learning to do different work than what your life goals are. Moses herded sheep for 40 years before coming to Egypt, and Jesus was a good carpenter. The Lord uses many different schools to educate for His work — don't be afraid to go to **any** of them.

3. Work hard. Satisfaction is found in a job well done. Learn to do well the menial tasks, for every job has some of these, and you'll feel good about it.

Of course, don't work just for financial gain. Honesty, service, and happiness are more important things to consider. Work as you would want your employees to work if you were the boss.

4. Don't become a slave to your work. This is an opposite swing of the pendulum. In your free time, do something that contrasts with your work — and something you really enjoy. Hobbies and sports such as jogging, reading, gardening, cycling and even a little TV might be needed to change the pace.

As a result of sin, God gave man labor. But let's remember that He gave it to increase man's happiness. Work should be enjoyable. If it's not, and you've followed the above suggestions, get some counsel from someone with experience — who you know enjoys his work. It's important that you try hard to make those 40, 50, or 60 hours a week some of the best times of your life.

To Consider:

1. Why is work a necessity for humanity?
2. If a man works in a menial position and feels unfulfilled, how can he avoid or deal with this feeling?
3. Explain the fact that work is a valuable gift.
4. Why is it that retirement is so hard for many people to accept?
5. What do you think God's work is like? Is all of it enjoyable?
6. Does our work reflect our relationship to God? If so, how?
7. What other activities give the same satisfactions that come from work?

YOU'RE
NEXT

VISIONS OF SERVICE

Objective: To catch the large vision of what we are called to be and to do for Christ in the world.

February 4 - 10
Editor: Beth Sales



□ February 4
Sunday

The Happiness of Helping

by Ruthita Fike

Mark closed his book, *Wealth is Right*, and leaned back in the plush recliner. He was an 18-year-old freshman at Opulence University. He had wanted to be rich ever since he could remember, and had enrolled in OU because it produced more wealthy people than any other university in the world. He was taking a full 16 hours of classes ranging from a speech course entitled, "The Magnetism of Hitler 108" to an advanced accounting course entitled "Money Matters 463."

Despite the fact that he was doing well in all of his classes, he felt morose. Earlier that day he had been doing some

research in the archives of the University library, and had run across a book which had disturbed him. He was sure that the book had been left out quite by accident, as all subversive literature was kept in a locked vault on the lowest level of the library. Only the instructors were allowed to see the books, and they only when they were in the process of publishing something refuting the ideas contained in the questionable sources.

The book was called *The Holy Bible*. Mark had heard of the book from his grandmother, a woman whom Mark's parents ridiculed.

"Grandma is a ridiculous

Illustration cont.

woman.” they often said. “She could have been rich, but she spent too much of her time trying to help other people — even when they didn’t appreciate it. She even spends money on other people. We’ll never know how Grandpa endured the embarrassment all these years. She has always been concerned about being happy, and she doesn’t think money helps. I guess all families are allowed one kook.”

Mark rarely thought about being happy, but the book he had stumbled upon had talked about it. The book certainly had to have been the source of Grandma’s ideas. Mark had spent about an hour poring over the pages, and would not have stopped then except for fear of getting caught. He was rather sure that it would have meant immediate expulsion had he been found reading the book.

There were several passages that plagued Mark, and in an effort to forget them, he went jogging. Mark was very familiar with the statistics which show that top executives are usually in good physical condition, and he had adopted a serious health program several years earlier. He prided himself on his toned body and clear mind. Physical fitness, at least, would not stand in his way of acquiring wealth.

He started jogging the route he had mapped out at the beginning of school, which included a long and rather strenuous hill. At the foot of the hill he passed an old man laden with packages. His face was red with exertion. Mark jogged by without a word.

“Stupid old man,” he thought. “If he had used his intelligence and strength when he was younger, he could afford to pay for some-

one else to take those packages up the hill.”

Mark reached the crest of the hill in a few minutes, turned and ran back down. The old gentleman had advanced only a couple of yards. Just as Mark reached him, the old man dropped his topmost package. To avoid stepping on it Mark had to jerk his body to the left. He landed on his foot crooked and fell to his knees.

“Are you hurt?” the old man asked worriedly.

“I don’t know yet, but I don’t think so.” As Mark turned to speak to the man, he noticed that the package on the pavement had broken open and a doll’s head peered out. He had fallen to avoid stepping on a stupid doll!

“What are you doing with a doll, anyway?” he snapped.

“It’s for my next door neighbor’s girl.” The old man smiled as he spoke. “She has the measles and I thought it might make her feel better.”

“How can you afford to buy her something like that?” Mark asked. “And surely not all of those packages are for other people,” he continued, noticing names written on them.

“They certainly are,” the old man beamed. “And I can hardly wait to deliver them.”

For the first time Mark looked into the old man’s face. Laugh lines wrinkled his surprisingly bright eyes.

“Can I help you up?” the old man asked. “I am awfully sorry,” he added.

“No, I can manage.” Mark paused. “I was wondering if I could help you carry your things to the top of the hill.” The odd, unfamiliar words were out before he could stop them.

“My, that **would** be nice. We can talk on the way, too.”

By the time they reached

Illustration cont.

the top, Mark and the old man felt fairly well acquainted. Mark was starting to feel a sensation that was unfamiliar — **friendliness**.

“Thanks so much for helping me, young man. I can make it from here. I find it rather unique that a student of Opulence University would take time to help. I’m surprised that you aren’t attending that lecture that I heard about in town today, “How to Beat the Stock Market.”

Mark flushed. He **had** intended to hear that. He already was dabbling in the stock market, and could have used the advice. *Forgetting that lecture could be a costly mistake*, he thought.

Mark told the old man

goodbye and prepared to return to the University. Perhaps he could at least pick up the conclusion of the lecture. As he started downhill, he started to whistle. He felt good. The morose feeling had passed. Mark stopped. He couldn’t remember the last time that he had felt like whistling. And suddenly he turned and walked the other way.

“Uh - sir?” he called. “I think I have time to help carry those packages the rest of the way home.” His heart was in his throat as he spoke.

“Maybe every family should have **two** kooks,” he thought, as he once again retraced his steps uphill.

A. **Moses' and Paul's Call and Service**

Exodus 3:1-10 - call of Moses

Acts 9:3-4, 15 - call of Paul

26:12-18

Both of these men were called to service by God to deliver God's people. Let us look at the similarities and the differences of the two calls.

Education

Exodus 2:10;3:1

The education of Moses took place in two places: The **intellectual** took place in the high school and university training at the court of the pharaoh, and his **leadership** training was gained in the wilderness, studying the book of nature and the behavior of sheep.

Acts 22:3;

Gal. 1:12

In Paul's case we see again the preparation that went into the life of a very successful servant of God — good **intellectual** preparation and later the crown of education and **leadership** given by God himself in solitude — Arabia.

Reaction to the Call

Exodus 3:11-4:18

Deut. 34:10-12

Moses reacted very **negatively** to God's call for service. God even became angry when Moses persisted in his refusal to accept the job. But after Moses had accepted his duties as the leader of a nation of slaves his commitment was absolute. No greater praise can be given to any person as is stated in this text.

Acts 9:6, 20

Young and zealous, Saul was different. Not only did he instantly **accept** God's call, but was just as dedicated in preaching Jesus as he had been in persecuting the Christians a few days before.

God's Calls Change Those He Calls

Exodus 34:29

Service for God produces a change in the countenance of God's servant.

Acts 9:20

The persecutor turns into a missionary.

Here we see that something quite remarkable takes place with those who accept the call to service. The former old shepherd experiences a physical transformation that is visible to everybody around him. The former persecutor of the fledgling Christian community turns into its greatest missionary.

Reward

Deut. 34:1-4

The Lord rewarded Moses by showing him the earthly promised land — the land of Israel. And by resurrecting him He allowed him to see the work of Jesus

Christ, the Saviour not only of Israel but of all nations.

At the end of a successful life Paul was sure that he had earned his eternal reward.

2 Tim 4:6-8

B. Reflection

The study of the foregoing biblical examples can teach us much in regard to God's way of calling people for service. Moses and Paul were probably the two greatest success stories in the history of God's people. There are two important points that should be emphasized.

First, both of these men had received the **best** education of their times. Moses being the son of Pharaoh's daughter must have received the finest education that Egypt had to offer. How much the Egyptian court could give can easily be seen, for example, in the stunning engineering feats they accomplished by building the pyramids and temples. In the case of Paul we also can see that he had been trained by the best teacher of his times — Rabbi Gamaliel.

Secondly, we can see that this was not enough. God had to give them further training away from school and teachers, in the solitude of the desert. But the second did not take place until the first was completed.

C. Discussion

(a) As God's children and college students who have been called into service, should we be satisfied with mediocrity? What can we do to receive the best education in secular and religious subjects? Am I willing to spend four years or however long it takes to get the intellectual maturity needed for service?

(b) Into which category do I fit when God calls — that of Moses who refused as long as he could, or that of Paul who responded at once? Is one reaction preferable? Is it possible that I am calling myself for a service that God does not want me to do?

TESTIMONY

Ellen G. White

The ministry of Christ, and that which made Him most effective in His interpersonal relationships, was the work of service to others. Service is a rare quality in a world which sees on every hand the strong exploiting the weak and each man serving his own interests. Service, when performed in love, is the most eloquent argument we may have in favor of Christianity.

Every Christian is called to service. "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2). "It is the privilege of every soul to be a living channel through which God can communicate to the world the treasures of His grace, the unsearchable riches of Christ. There is nothing that Christ desires so much as agents who will represent to the world His spirit and character. There is nothing that the world needs so much as the manifestation through humanity of the Savior's love. All heaven is waiting for channels through which can be poured the holy oil to be a joy and blessing to human hearts." (*Christ's Object Lessons*, page 419.) "We should feel it our special duty to work for those living in our neighborhood or dormitory." (*Messages to Young People*, page 40.) "As you visit your friends . . . show an interest in their spiritual as well as in their temporal welfare." (*Ministry of Healing*, page 152.)

While preparing for what he considers a larger work, the student should not neglect the opportunities for service that are available to him every day. "Let none pass by little opportunities, to look for larger work. You might do successfully the small work, but fail utterly in attempting the larger work, and fall into discouragement. It is by doing with your might what you find to do that you will develop aptitudes for larger work." (*Ministry of Healing*, page 153.)

The preparation needed for the work of service is that of communion with God. "In a life wholly devoted to the good of others, the Saviour found it necessary to turn aside from ceaseless activity and contact with human need, to seek retirement and unbroken communion with His Father. . . All who are under the training of God need the quiet hour for communion with their own hearts, with nature, and with God." (*Ministry of Healing*, page 58.)

The rewards of service? The payoff? God has provided that too. "We are not to think of reward, but of service; yet kindness shown in this spirit will not fail of its recompense. 'Thy Father which seeth in secret Himself shall reward thee openly.' While it is true that God Himself is the great Reward, that embraces every other, the soul receives and enjoys Him in character. Only like can appreciate like. It is as we give ourselves to God for the service of humanity that He gives Himself to us. No one can give place in his own heart and life for the stream of God's blessing to flow to others, without receiving in himself a great reward." (*Mount of Blessing*, p. 81.) "The little attentions, the small acts of love and self-sacrifice, that flow out from the life as quietly as the fragrance from a flower — these constitute no small share of the blessings and happiness for life . . . Those who have sought for the development and perfection of Christian character by exercising their faculties in good works, will, in the world to come, reap that which they have sown. The work begun upon earth will reach its consummation in that higher and holier life to endure throughout eternity." (*Mount of Blessing*, pages 82, 83.)

Loving service is the Christian's trademark

Communion with God prepares for service

Service is rewarded

James McClelland is an assistant professor of art and chairman of the art department at Union College.

Altruism

According to a behavioral view, **altruism** is any conduct that helps another, regardless of the motive. The motivational definition of altruism, however, is that a helping act is truly altruistic when it is motivated by an anticipation of positive consequences for **another** individual.¹ That is, the person acts in concern for another rather than for what he may gain for it.

Both reinforcement theories and psychoanalytic theories hold that all behavior is basically motivated by self-concern. It is argued that even if a person rescues another from a burning house, and thereby puts himself in danger, he does so to gain admiration of others, maintain consistency of his concept of his ideal self, or for other self-advancing ideas of which he may or may not be conscious.

Much behavior is basically selfish

Another behavioral viewpoint is that some altruistic acts are motivated by selfish reasoning, and others are accidental because of circumstances. For example: Someone finds and returns a wallet containing a large sum of money. Could a possible reward be a motivating factor? Or suppose a person is waiting to board a bus and a disembarking passenger falls. When the first person helps the other to his feet, is it because of an altruistic motive or because of circumstances?

Helpful model encourages helping

It has been shown repeatedly that observing a helpful model encourages the observer to be helpful. If a child observes parents who demonstrate a willingness to help others and who talk with the child about helping, he will grow up to be a helpful person. While relatively few studies on the altruism of parents and their children have yielded consistent results,² they have helped support the identification hypothesis which says helpful parents would be expected to have helpful children. For instance, when interviewing Christians who helped rescue Jews in Germany,³ an intense identification with a parent who had very firm opinions on moral issues was found in all of the rescuers.

In the Christian's service to his fellow men, it is very difficult to isolate the motives. A missionary's thrilling tales of mission service or the inspiration of a favorite teacher or pastor may spur some forward into these realms of service. For others, positions of leadership, travel, financial security, or reputation can be the motivating factor.

Let God analyze and change motives

How does one **know** that he is motivated aright? How does one examine all the roads to service? It is a very complex matter. Only as a Christian surrenders his life to God can he end the chaos of endless self-analysis in which all motives are suspect. One must be willing to pray the prayer of the psalmist: "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." (Ps. 139: 23, 24). The Lord searches our hearts and tries our thoughts by His Word and by His Spirit. He is able, if we permit, to lay bare our deepest thoughts and most secret intentions. The Holy Spirit is there to help us think through our motives for love and service, and then he constantly reshapes those motives and desires until we are prompted to serve God from the highest motive possible. The law of service becomes the connecting link which binds us both to God and to our fellow man.

1. Middlebrook, Patricia Niles. *Social Psychology and Modern Life*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. 1974.
2. Kohlberg, L. *Handbook of Socialization Theory and Research*. Chicago: Rand McNally, 1969.
3. London, P. *Altruism and Helping Behavior: Social Psychological Studies of Some Antecedents and Consequences*. New York: Academic Press, 1970.

This week we have been discussing several aspects of Christian service. We have compared Moses' and Paul's calls to service and have been challenged to adopt God's ideal for successful service. In this article, I would like to discuss several aspects of successful service. For I view successful service as selfless service, prepared service, and "improving-every-opportunity" service.

"Do good and disappear" are words from the diary of Genevieve Hennem DeGoutel, a heroic French nurse who died in World War I. These words were painted over the door of a ward in a convent hospital in Belgium where she received her training.

The meaning of the saying is immediately apparent. It's this: When you say something or do something helpful for a fellow human being, **don't stand around waiting to collect gratitude.** Simply give, say, or do, then disappear. The concept behind "Do good and disappear" is an important part of successful service. But selfless efforts are witnessed very few times. It is as if one has a gaunt and rapacious wolf inside, hungry for gratitude, recognition, and self-esteem. Still God admonishes us to serve Him through unselfishly serving others. Thus, the **Biblical commitment** to helping others, combined with the **image of Jesus as a model** gives us the ultimate concept of altruism — selfless service.

Successful service is also contingent upon **preparation.** God has given to each of His children special abilities. The first duty of the Christian then is to develop these abilities. This takes time. In fact, God's own Son spent thirty years in training before He began His ministry. Certainly, our training will also take years. But the Christian's ministry cannot be successful without this proper preparation. It's exciting to think that even now the Holy Spirit may be transforming our clumsy methods of service into those that show divine influence.

Finally, successful service is contingent upon making the most of even small opportunities. A story is told of a couple who unexpectedly inherited a sum of money. One of their oldest neighbors explained the reason for the inheritance this way: "Just what should have happened. Remember when Charlie didn't have a cent of cash for the hospital fund — he gave two days of his time hauling stone? Belle's the same way. She never waits until that 'someday' when she can do the Big Thing for you. She does all the little things when you need them the most. She can be as happy, and a lot more generous, with a package of petunia seeds than some women with a hothouse full of gardenias." (Nichols, 1959)

We are chosen, prepared and challenged to serve God by unselfishly serving our fellow men. To have selfless, prepared, and "making-the-most-from-small-opportunities" service is to know the joy of fellowship with the Father.

"Do good and disappear"

Successful service depends upon preparation

Make the most of small opportunities

HOW TO

The challenge to “finish the work” rings frequently in our ears these days. We are challenged to committed involvement for the cause of God. How should we respond to this challenge as individuals? If we are to gain a clearer vision of the service to which Christ has called us, we must begin by defining our personal roles in His work and by choosing to accept the role He has for us. The following steps may be helpful.

1. Realize that God has chosen you to play a unique role in His service.

God made you in His image as a unique and creative individual, and nobody else can play the role He has planned for you as well as you can. Paul was God’s “chosen instrument” (Acts 9:15) and you too are “chosen” to do something for God that nobody else can do in quite the same way.

If you decline to accept the role God has for you, His purposes will still be accomplished, but you would be missing out on the happiness that comes from being what you were designed to be.

2. Seek to Discover What Your Role Is.

What do you like to do? What are you good at? Answers to these questions go a long way towards helping you decide what your role is. If you are committed to following Him, you can serve Christ in nearly any vocational capacity.

Of course, career selection is only one aspect of discovering your role of service. God seeks our service in everyday things like considerate treatment of those around us and a willingness to share our material and spiritual blessings. The key factors are (1) being sensitized day by day to the fact that you are needed in God’s service and (2) being willing to get involved where you are needed. Through daily communion with Him, God will show you where the needs are and help you to decide how you can most effectively help to meet those needs.

3. Make a Commitment to Quality in Filling Your Role.

“Winning isn’t the most important thing, it’s the only thing” is the rather strenuous proverb attributed to the late Vince Lombardi, who coached the Green Bay Packers to several football championships in the late 1960s. Success in football requires a commitment that expresses itself in intense practice, training, and exertion on the field. Part of catching a larger vision of service to Christ is a commitment to the best in whatever we do.

Catching a larger vision of the service to which Christ has called us means understanding that He indeed has a special role for us to fill; it means a commitment, made with confidence in God’s power, to discovering and fulfilling that role.

To Consider:

1. What benefits (physical, mental, spiritual) can be obtained through service to God?
2. Can you give any examples from your own life or from those of others to support the answers given to question 1?
3. If a person **doesn't** find joy or fulfillment in service, does this mean he doesn't have the right relationship with God?
4. How can I prepare myself spiritually and mentally for joyful service to God?
5. How do we know to what specific area of service we are called?

CARING

Objective: To show that Christian love is caring and doing for others.

February 11 - 17
Editor: Dean Fowler



□ February 11
Sunday

The Root Beer To Go*

by Max Phillips

The new academy dean looked at the new boy, sizing him up mentally. He was huge, muscular and sullen. Why, on a hot fall evening, did they send you to me? he thought. If I tell you to stand up, you'll sit down. If I tell you to sit down, you'll stand up. You're just plain defiant. You want to be kicked out of school.

"The bell's rung," he said aloud. "You're supposed to be in your room."

"I am in my room," the boy said, leaning against the door jamb, half in, half out of his room, his large feet sprawling out on the hallway floor.

I could have you dismissed from school for that, the dean thought. But he didn't want to think about it. The night was too hot. It wasn't worth it — fighting with this belligerent boy. He would leave a monitor in charge while he drove down to the root beer stand.

"A 25-cent root beer," he told the girl when he got there. "No — make it two — one to go."

Back at the dorm the boy was still outside his room. He was in the lobby thumbing restlessly through a magazine.

"I told him several times to get to his room," the monitor

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Illustration cont.

said, eyeing the dean's root-beer-to-go. "He just swore at me under his breath."

"Let me take care of it," the dean said.

He walked down the hall, stepped inside the boy's room, set the root beer on his desk, and then walked back to the lobby where the boy was still sitting with the magazine.

"I'd like for you to go to your room," he said. "I've got something there waiting for you."

"Probably an irregularity slip," the boy mumbled. He raised his voice "Look, dean, you don't have to monkey around like that with me. Why don't you quit pestering me? Go ahead and kick me out of here. That's what you want anyhow."

The dean said nothing, just turned and walked back to his office. He sat down, trying to go over some worship absences; but it was impossible to concentrate. Maybe it was just too hot.

There was a knock on the door.

"Come in."

It was the boy, an odd look on his face. "Dean, did you leave that root beer on my

desk?"

"Well, uh, yes — I thought — It's a hot night, and I thought you might like something cold."

"Thanks, dean." The boy stood there for a second...two seconds...then he suddenly began to talk in an odd, soft voice. "Nobody ever does anything for me . . . Dad kicked me around until I got big enough to whip him. Mom cries all the time. I can't stand it at home. They don't want me. Dad'll pay all my bills here at the academy just to keep me away. Don't know where I'm going if you kick me out. Sure not going home."

"I'm not going to kick you out," the dean said, noting with surprise that he had just then made his decision. "Incidentally," he continued, changing the subject, "the fellows say you're the best weight lifter in the school. Maybe you could help coach a physical fitness club."

"Yeah, I'd like that," said the boy just before he turned and walked quickly toward the door, but not too quickly for the dean to notice a slight glistening in his eyes.

The Bible is kind, warm, and touching in its admonitions bearing upon godly, Christian love and its outreach in a caring attitude:

"A friend loveth at all times . . ." Prov. 17:17.

"Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love . . ." Rom. 12:10.

"With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love." Eph. 4:2.

"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." I John 3:18.

How literally do you accept the meaning of these passages? Have you ever thought of developing a theology of caring? Of Christian love and service? What would you do or what do you usually do when someone asks you for money? Especially if they really need it?

"If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother: But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth." Deut. 15:7, 8.

"He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise." Luke 3:11.

Do you ever go out of your way to do a favor for someone? How do you react when asked to do a favor? Do you weigh your answer by how hard it might be?

"They helped every one his neighbor; and every one said to his brother, Be of good courage." Isa. 41:6.

Sometimes our everyday attitudes can be very wounding to people. How much effort each day do you put into being as friendly and caring as you can? Do you smile and say hello to those you pass on the sidewalk? Are you warm and friendly when greeted?

"And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Eph. 4:32.

". . . there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another." I Cor. 12:25.

"Bear ye one another's burdens . . ." Gal. 6:2.

The very ability that we have to function as Christians lies in our caring attitudes for others. Could our eternal life be affected by how we view this concept of loving and caring for our brothers and sisters? Think about it.

". . . by love serve one another." Gal. 5:13.

TESTIMONY

Ellen G.
White

"A new commandment I give unto you," Christ said, "That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." John 13:34. What a wonderful statement; but, oh, how poorly practiced! In the church of God today, brotherly love is sadly lacking. Many who profess to love the Savior do not love one another. Unbelievers are watching to see if the faith of professed Christians is exerting a sanctifying influence upon their lives; and they are quick to discern the defects in character, the inconsistencies in action. Let Christians not make it possible for the enemy to point to them and say, Behold how these people, standing under the banner of Christ, hate one another. Christians are all members of one family, all children of the same heavenly Father, with the same blessed hope of immortality. Very close and tender should be the tie that binds them together.

Divine love makes its most touching appeals to the heart when it calls upon us to manifest the same tender compassion that Christ manifested. That man who has only unselfish love for his brother has true love for God. The true Christian will not unwillingly permit the soul in peril and need to go unwarned, uncared for. He will not hold himself aloof from the erring, leaving them to plunge farther into unhappiness and discouragement or to fall on Satan's battleground.

Those who have never experienced the tender, winning love of Christ cannot lead others to the fountain of life. His love in the heart is a constraining power, which leads men to reveal Him in the conversation, in the tender, pitiful spirit, in the uplifting of the lives of those with whom they associate. Christian workers who succeed in their efforts must know Christ; and in order to know Him, they must know His love. In heaven their fitness as workers is measured by their ability to love as Christ loved and to work as He worked.

"Let us not love in word," the apostle writes, "but in deed and in truth." The completeness of Christian character is attained when the impulse to help and bless others springs constantly from within. It is the atmosphere of this love surrounding the soul of the believer that makes him a savor of life unto life and enables God to bless his work.

Supreme love for God and unselfish love for one another — this is the best gift that our heavenly Father can bestow. This love is not an impulse, but a divine principle, a permanent power. The unconsecrated heart cannot originate or produce it. Only in the heart where Jesus reigns is it found. "We love Him, because He first loved us." In the heart renewed by divine grace, love is the ruling principle of action. It modifies the character, governs the impulses, controls the passions, and ennoble the affections. This love, cherished in the soul, sweetens the life and sheds a refining influence on all around.

John strove to lead the believers to understand the exalted privileges that would come to them through the exercise of the spirit of love. This redeeming power, filling the heart, would control every other motive and raise its possessors above the corrupting influences of the world. And as this love was allowed full sway and became the motive power in the life, their trust and confidence in God and His dealing with them would be complete.

Love
completely

Love
completely
continually

Acts of the Apostles, pp. 550-552.

Love is an emotion — an internal state or condition — that happens even to the best of us. We cannot measure love directly because, like all emotions, love is an intra-psycho experience — a happening that takes place inside our minds. But we can measure loving behaviors and discuss them objectively.

From their studies of laboratory monkeys, Harry and Margaret Harlow identified five types of love:

- a. that of the infant for its mother;
- b. that of the mother for her infant;
- c. that of a young monkey for its peers;
- d. The sexual love of one adult for another;
- e. the paternal love of a father toward his children.

The following discussion will combine several of these ideas as they relate to human beings.

A newborn monkey clings to its mother because she gives it warmth, food, and contact comfort. Warmth is the most important input during the first two weeks of the infant's life; thereafter, contact comfort is more important. These studies also showed that a young monkey would cling to any warm surrogate mother if deprived of its real mother. Contact with the surrogate mother or its real mother appears to give the infant the trust that it needs to mature perceptually and emotionally. Deprived of this contact, the infant monkey falls into an anaclitic depression and may die. This points out the absolute necessity of a proper loving attitude and care on the part of the mother or guardian of young children. Thus, love — types "a" and "b" are interrelated.

If the infant grows up without playing with other young monkeys, it never develops peer love and does not know how to respond in social situations. The warm, loving attitudes that characterize advanced primates, including humans, are formed only by a close association with peers. Again, if this relationship is for some reason unhealthy during a period of infancy or youth, this will destroy the primate's ability to love and care easily.

Sexual love grows out of peer love. Young monkeys deprived of the association of their peers do not mate in the usual fashion. In humans, deviations are noted with rising rapidity when the home and social situations are grossly unhealthy.

In both humans and monkeys, the "maternal instinct" is greatly influenced by learning and early experience. Female monkeys raised on surrogate mothers often treat their first infants cruelly. Women who were themselves neglected as children are more likely than usual to abuse or harm their own children.

Our early experiences strongly affect the types of behaviors we display as adults. Fortunately, with the right kind of training or therapy, both monkeys and humans can often overcome the many problems associated with growing up in poor social environments. These studies indicate the importance of loving care and concern of parents for their children, of peers for their associates, and of all human beings for their fellow human beings. Much mental illness and human suffering will thus be avoided, and the result will be men and women who function in society with peak effectiveness.

Adapted from: McConnell, James V. *Understanding Human Behavior*. 2nd edition. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1977), pp. 438-459.

Harlow, H.F., M.K. Harlow, and S.J. Suomi. "From Thought to Therapy: Lessons from a Primate Laboratory." *American Scientist*, vol. 59, no. 5 (September-October 1971), pp. 539-540.

EVIDENCE

Science,
History,
Philosophy

Initial
loving
attitudes
are
important

Love is
formed by
peer
associ-
ations

We love
as we
are loved

What is love? What is care? What motivates a person to display a loving, caring attitude for his fellow men and women? Caring for and loving someone involves a relationship that transcends human understanding. By looking at how love is used in another language, perhaps we can better understand what love is, what caring for someone involves.

In the Greek language, three words are used for love. **Eros** refers to sexual love, the physical love manifested between lovers. **Phileo** denotes brotherly love, family love, the love displayed between close friends. **Agape** is possibly the hardest to define. It is the deepest love, the God love, the love that God manifested toward a race of sinners in allowing His Son to die for them. When these three concepts of love are combined in different relationships, then the human soul is elevated far above the mundane things of this world.

One of the greatest gifts of God to the human race is the physical, sexual relationship that exists between lovers. But when two people develop these feelings for each other, the relationship goes much deeper than just the physical, **eros** love. **Agape** love also enters the union, and when **agape** and **eros** are blended, the human soul is elevated to tremendous heights of happiness and understanding. This is a prime reason for a loving, caring, concerned relationship between two people. A human being is willing to go through personal sacrifice and hardship out of an intense love for the one close to him.

When friends and families learn to trust, care, and confide in each other and among themselves, they begin to see the beauty of **phileo** and **agape** love combined. A warm smile, the touch of a hand, a word of praise, an unasked favor, a small sacrifice for the happiness of the other, these are the rainbows of life.

The results of love — in its physical sense, its emotional sense, and its spiritual sense — are in many ways the elevating of the human being to the lofty stature of when he was first created. When love in its truest sense is practiced, the human being is willing to sacrifice for others, to give up personal wishes for the satisfaction of his loved ones, even to undergo personal harm to care for those close to him. And the Christian will go even a step further — to die for his friends, to die to protect another human being. What greater love has God given to us?

As we continue to manifest these three types of love, our sensibilities will be elevated, our minds ennobled, we will be brought into a closer union with our heavenly Father, and we will value increasingly our relationships with other members of the human family.

Think about the people who have made a difference in your own life. The people who have cared, who have worked with you to reach your goals, and shared your joys and sorrows along the way. Will the Christ-like example of their sacrifice make any difference in your life? Will your example make any difference in theirs? Happiness, tremendous joy, assurance of being accepted, emotional, physical, and spiritual comfort are the fruits of putting into practice love in all its forms.

Eros
Phileo
Agape

True love
is
sacrificial

Love
brings us
close to
God

Human beings are instinctively selfish creatures. To the mind un sanctified by Christ, caring for and loving others is repulsive. The idea of unselfish care and concern for anyone other than oneself is foreign to those who are unconverted. The question then is, how can one become a caring and loving person?

If we are to function as Christians — that is, to “do unto others as you would have them do unto you” — then we need intimate communion with our heavenly Father. Only He can instill in us love and care for others — only He can change our very natures from self-centeredness to compassion for all men. “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature . . .”

II Corinthians 5:17. Christ was the finest example of a Human Being Who gave Himself completely for mankind — physically, emotionally, and spiritually. As we become infused with His character, His personality, His attributes, then we too will have a burning desire to reach out to others in loving concern and care.

What this means is that we need to have a good devotional life. A **living** relationship with God is so extremely important. For, if we separate ourselves from God, we also separate ourselves from effective contact with humanity — and we are not able to be loving or caring.

But, for those of you who know God, and thereby have a loving, caring concern for other people, you will naturally want to put your concern into action. This can be accomplished in many ways, and as you grow in the grace and power of God, avenues for caring will open up. Therefore, consider these two things you can do now to show your concern for others.

1. Make yourself available as a good listener. This in itself can do great things for some people. As a person pours out his problems and burdens to you, you can direct him to the Source of all peace where he can lay his burdens down and come away refreshed and uplifted. God will work through you in this manner if you will let Him.

2. Without being asked, do something nice for someone. If you're lucky, performing an unasked favor will allow you to reach this person for Christ. Or, more simply, it will make that person so happy to know you care. The twenty-five cent root beer mentioned in the story at the beginning of this lesson is a good example of this. Little things mean a lot to people.

Christianity itself is bound up in loving concern and care for others. Let each of us determine that others shall see Christianity in us — true, loving, caring Christianity.

To Consider:

1. When a relative or someone else is **extremely** unloving, how far do one's Christian duties go in caring for that person?
2. Does **everyone** have the gift of service, and does everyone need to exercise in this area?
3. List some specific action steps you can take to come to realize the needs some of your fellow human beings have, and to become concerned about them.
4. Did Christ actually have a yearning, aching, compassionate love for every human being? If so, how do you think He developed this love? Is it possible for us to develop this type of love, and what are some specific action steps we can take in this matter?
5. Ought we to consciously adopt the mannerisms of a caring person (gentle smile, firm handshake, soft and sympathetic voice)? To what extent should we put on these mannerisms? Does practicing them make us feel more that way?

WHAT TO DO WITH GOD'S GIFTS

Objective: To cultivate a generous spirit with everything we possess based on trusting God.

February 18 - 24
Editor: Kandi Dickinson



□ February 18
Sunday

Everything

by Kandi Dickinson

She stepped out of her home and made her way through the narrow streets on her way to the temple. As she hurried over the white cobblestones, her heart was filled with joy. God had been so good to her! How she wished she could show her gratitude more fully! However, she was very poor, and as she remembered this fact she began to wonder if her offering would mean anything at all.

When she had lost her husband and gradually her little savings also, she had been forced into a lower standard of living than she had

been accustomed to. Now she brought in barely enough money each week to live on. Often she longed to help one of her equally poor neighbors, and would "get by" with less herself in order to do this, even though this meant that she had to do without things that were **necessary** — and not merely with anything bordering on luxury, which others might consider a sacrifice. When it first occurred to her to give her week's earnings to the Lord, she had thought it through most carefully. Was it foolishness to give all that she had, not

Illustration cont.

knowing how she would survive through the week?

However, even as she was contemplating this, the thoughts of how good God had been to her came to her mind, and any doubts she had had were quickly swept away. After all, He'd kept her healthy, and she wasn't actually starving, as many of the people in her district were. She was able to walk, to travel to the temple, which wasn't the case with her crippled uncle. Yes, she had things quite good, and she wanted to respond. She was filled with an urgent desire — a need — to show her Father how appreciative she was of His love and care for her.

Nearing the temple gate she thought, "This is the hard part — passing by the Pharisees and rich people inside the temple by the offering box. Maybe if I keep my head low and walk fast enough, I can

go by unnoticed."

With this in mind she quickly walked up to the offering box and dropped in her two tiny coins — everything she had. Turning, she felt the stares and whispers of those around her. "Maybe I should never have done it," she thought.

As she was nearing the place where she had entered, however, she heard a comment which she was to remember for the rest of her life. "...For the others gave from what they had to spare of their riches; but she, poor as she is, gave all she had to live on."

As this poor woman walked to her home her heart was light, warmed by the knowledge that her gift was acceptable to God; as acceptable as any large sum of money would have been. "How glad I am" she thought, "that I gave all that I had."

Many of us have been brought up with the idea of giving, usually in the form of offerings taken at church. But is it possible that the true way of interpreting the word "giving" could result in the realization of a much broader meaning? Let us consider several Bible quotes in search of the answer.

In Proverbs 11:25 we read: **"Be generous, and you will be prosperous. Help others, and you will be helped."** Here King Solomon, under the inspiration of God, points out a principle quite often talked about in reference to the subject of giving: that by giving freely of what we have received in earthly goods, we will be blessed, because by giving we have shown that we recognize God as the source of all that we have in this earth (Eccl. 5:19, 20).

We are
blessed
by giving

We may already have a clear understanding of this, but what about the latter part of the text? "Help others, and you will be helped." It would seem that by giving of yourself you would be emptying yourself at the same time, resulting in the eventual inability of giving, as there would be nothing left to give; but consider what Jesus said to us in Luke 6:38: **"Give to others, and God will give to you. Indeed, you will receive a full measure, a generous helping, poured into your hands — all that you can hold. The measure you use for others is the one that God will use for you."** It seems that, although Jesus could also be making reference to a monetary aspect of giving in this text, the message is very applicable to the giving of oneself, on a personal basis, to another person or persons, possibly in the forms of encouragement and strengthening. We find in this verse a very real promise — for instead of "losing" part of ourselves by giving, we will actually be gaining. What is it that we will be gaining, though?

Giving
brings
gladness,
unity and
praise

In the experience of the early Christian church we find certain characteristics common among those that had given all they had to their Lord, without any reserve. We read in Acts 2: 46-47: **"And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people."** It would appear as if the act of "giving" has more blessings than we may have previously realized. When a person is on "good terms" with another, the communion they share is very sweet, and it is easy to see how they could be glad. It would be hoped that in their gladness they would realize who was the originator of this joy, and would praise God.

Let us consider 1 Timothy 6:17-19 as a summary of what has been presented in today's lesson: **"Command those who are rich in the things of this life not to be proud, but to place their hope, not in such an uncertain thing as riches, but in God, who generously gives us everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share with others. In this way they will store up for themselves a treasure which will be a solid foundation for the future. And then they will be able to win the life which is true life."**

TESTIMONY

Ellen G.
White

Are people today afraid to trust God — afraid to trust a Being who created everything, living and non-living, and therefore owns everything? This mistrust of God is shown very clearly in the area of giving of our worldly goods, as well as in the talents, whatever form they may take which God has entrusted to us to use in drawing others to Him. Ellen White has many deep insights into this aspect of the Christian life, and a few of these will be presented in the following paragraphs.

In reference to the gift of salvation given to us by the Redeemer of the world, we read: "The gospel invitation is not to be narrowed down and presented only to a select few, who, we suppose, will do us honor if they accept it. The message is to be given to all. When God blesses His children, it is not alone for their own sake, but for the world's sake. As He bestows His gifts on us, it is that we may multiply them by imparting." We find further evidence that we should give of what we have received from Christ as we read on concerning the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, who talked with Jesus and received the blessing He was so willing to bestow. "This woman represents the working of a practical faith in Christ. Every true disciple is born into the Kingdom of God as a missionary. No sooner does he come to know the Saviour than he desires to make others acquainted with Him . . . He who drinks of the living water becomes a fountain of life. The receiver becomes a giver." *The Ministry of Healing*, pg. 102.

In addition to the knowledge of Christ's gift of salvation, the Lord has entrusted "all, both high and low, rich and poor" with specific talents that can be used in the giving of ourselves to others. "God calls us servants, which implies that we are employed by Him to do certain work and bear certain responsibilities. He has lent us capital for investment. It is not our property, and we displease God if we hoard up our Lord's goods or spend them as we please. We are responsible for the use or abuse of that which God has thus lent us." *Testimonies*, vol. 2, pg. 667-8.

Concerning the aspect of giving in the area of our material possessions we read: "The Lord designed to bring man into close relationship with Himself and into sympathy and love with his fellow men by placing upon him responsibilities in deeds that would counteract selfishness and strengthen his love for God and man. The plan of system in benevolence God designed for the good of man, who is inclined to be selfish and to close his heart to generous deeds." *Testimonies*, vol. 3, pg. 393.

We will come to better understand why God wants us to give of ourselves when we participate in His plan by sharing the gift of salvation with others by using our talents for His service and by sharing our earthly goods to help further His cause. After what was given to us at Calvary, trusting our Saviour enough to realize that He will bless us in our efforts of giving should be easy to do.

Give the
gospel to
all

Give of
your
talents

Giving
brings us
close
to God

**Gifts of one who loved me --
'Twas high time they came;
When he ceased to love me,
Time they stopped, for shame.**

**True
gifts come
from love
and are
complete**

These thoughts from an essay, "Gifts," by Ralph Waldo Emerson, make a pointed comment that might be applied to our giving gifts in a spiritual context. Many Christians find it difficult to give gifts to God as an act of love in worship. True gifts can only come from the **love** motive. If we further follow Emerson's thought in his essay, we would conclude that anything else is not a gift, but rather something that, somehow, we seek to bestow as an attempt to appease God. Can man assume to bestow anything on his Creator, or can he actually appease a mighty God? The thought seems ludicrous. Yet too often we seem to attempt these very things. We buy salve for our conscience, or worse yet, we attempt to buy the Lord's favor, or a ticket to heaven. Emerson says, rather, that "the gift, to be true, must be the flowing of the giver unto me, correspondent to my flowing unto him. When the waters are at a level, then my goods pass to him, and his to me. All his are mine, all mine his." In the Christian context, this is what God desires. He has emptied heaven's storehouse for us. If our response is equal, if "the waters are at a level," then all we have is His as well. This includes our goods, our time, our influence — everything.

In his giving of gifts, the Christian recognizes God's ownership of all that He has made. The Christian becomes, when he gives from motives of true love and service, a cooperator in the plan of salvation, a co-worker with God.

Guilt is the result of *not doing that which we know we ought to do or which we regard as the ideal in our self-concept*. To put it in the terms of modern Rogerian psychotherapy: "Ideal self is the term used to denote the self-concept which the individual would most like to possess, upon which he places the highest value for himself." *Current Psychotherapies*, "Meador and Rogers: Client-Centered Therapy." If a discrepancy exists, the state is one of incongruence between self and experience. Anxiety and guilt are the result. The only psychologically healthy course is that in which we strive to close the gap between what we regard as our ideal self and our actual experience.

**True
giving is
free from
guilt and
anxiety**

Yet it is not enough to give just to relieve guilt and anxiety. When it "feels good" to give or when we "give until it hurts," we may only be relieving the symptoms of guilt and accompanying anxiety. When he gives because he is responding to God's love for him, when his giving is a recognition of God's binding claims on him through both creation and redemption, then the giving may also "feel good." In this sense, however, it is what Emerson calls "the flowing of the giver, God unto me, correspondent to my flowing unto him." It is a covenant relationship, free from the unhealthful effects of guilt and anxiety, and the only basis for true giving.

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E**

**Science,
History,
Philosophy**

A rather ageless question has been asked of me: "What does the word **giving** mean to you?" Here is my opinion:

"Giving" is a word we associate vaguely with the offering plate and the tithe envelope. What a horrid misconception of such an all-encompassing term! The trait of giving is displayed in so many little ways that we often overlook, and in overlooking them we're actually guilty of ingratitude. I know, myself, that my mother and father have given more to me in terms of love and sacrifice than I can ever comprehend, much less repay. Yet they would have it no other way.

The love of our parents is a small representation of the love shown to us on Calvary. For Jesus went to the cross knowing full well that many of us would never even acknowledge His sacrifice, much less respond to it. Yet He paid the price, never grudgingly, but always in a resolute and loving way. I long for such a love as His.

I know that many of us long so much to have a giving spirit. We try, but to no avail, to be like Christ in His selflessness. It was His selflessness that made Him what He was. In fact, this is where I feel true giving comes from. When we put self aside, and care more about another person and what happens to him than we care about ourselves, then we can truly give. We can view this person with our selfishness shoved in the corner, and in a Christlike spirit give him ourselves. We really do have so much to give — a smile, a hug, a helping hand (and brain in chemistry perhaps) and these "small" things are always appreciated.

To know someone who is always looking for ways to make others happy is a real treat. I'm sure we are all acquainted with someone whose very countenance brightens up our day. I have a friend who is like this. She never fails to astound me with her consistent Christian life. I admire her greatly and have often longed to be like her. After observing her for some time, I believe I have come upon her magic formula, and I've found that it isn't so magic after all, but instead it is a development and a growth. She simply comes to her Lord each morning and gives herself to Him. Having given herself to Him, she need no longer worry about herself and her feelings, because they don't belong to her any more. She then rests safely in Jesus' arms.

Mrs. White suggests in her writings that we should all spend a thoughtful hour each day meditating on the life of Christ. Through His sacrifice we see how concerned He is about each of us. Seeing His care and concern for our lives, we feel free to leave our cares and worries with Him. This leaves us free to give of His love to everyone we meet. Freely! Bountifully! Unreservedly! We don't need to fear what others will think of us, for Christ loves us and that is all that matters.

If I had one thought that I would like to leave with you, it would be this (and although it may sound corny, I ask you to consider it seriously): "**An hour a day, keeps you giving away.**"

Our parent's love can be compared to Jesus' love — complete

Giving ourselves to God makes us unselfish

Thinking about Christ's life makes us unselfish

“Give as God has prospered you!”

That’s what you always hear when the offering plate is passed around in church or Sabbath School. Does it make you feel a bit guilty?

Whenever I hear that statement, my spirit sinks into the depths of depression. How can I even begin to cultivate a generous spirit when I compare my own insignificant gifts with those of a God who owns everything and gives me everything? As I look at the magnificent splendor and majesty of God, and when I see His love and kindness and patience with sinful human beings like myself, how can I ever presume that I can give as much as God has given to me? And yet, embodied within this concept is the basic principle necessary for a complete understanding of giving. *Since God gave everything for me, I ought to withhold nothing from Him.*

The problem, of course, is that I have been so saturated with worldly philosophy, which is exactly the opposite of Godly philosophy, that I seemingly cannot — or will not — take that essential step of giving everything I am or have to God. What I have to do could be expressed in two steps. I must:

1. Realize that all “my possessions” are actually those things which God has chosen to give me the power to accumulate. At this moment you and I have nothing. My clothes, my food, my car, my life, my money — everything belongs to God. He may choose to give me these things once in a while — as blessings. If He does not choose to give me a new “blessing” I happen to want, I can have a new gratefulness for what He has bestowed upon me already. If He chooses to turn something of mine over to somebody else by impressing my spirit of that person’s need, then I am not yielding anything that belongs to me, but only dispensing God’s belongings to those He shows me need help.

2. Realize that I have a responsibility to be God’s administrator. Scripture plainly reveals in 1 Timothy 5:8 that a conviction such as the one explained here *would not necessitate the giving of very tangible possessions to God, but rather the development of a new philosophy which would acknowledge the ownership of everything I am, or have, as God’s.* Once I transfer this ownership of time, possessions, money, and self to God and evaluate every expenditure on the basis of how it will benefit the work or reputation of God either in my life or in the lives of those He has called me to serve, then I will have begun to grasp the true principle not of giving but of administrating all that God owns.

If I choose to hoard what God owns, and refuse the privilege of using what He owns to bring happiness to others, then I forfeit using what He owns, to bring happiness to others, and I forfeit the opportunity of experiencing the kind of joy that God intends for each of us to have.

To Consider:

1. How can giving actually be a joyous experience?
2. Is giving necessary? Why?
3. How much beyond my tithe should I give? How much of my talents should I give? Of my time? Are there any dangers in giving too much, and if so, what are they?
4. What does it mean to be a cheerful giver?
5. Do hermits and monks, who have dedicated their lives to solitude and meditation, give everything to the cause of God in the most effective way?
6. What conditions must be met for a person to be considered generous?

LIVING WITH THE FAMILY

Objective: To understand that no other influence shapes us as persons quite the way our own families do, and to accept the privilege and responsibility of being a good family member.

February 25 - March 3

Editor: Gwen Scott



□ February 25
Sunday

Blizzard!

by Gwen Scott

“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away.”

These words, underlined in a small, worn Bible, were found on an Iowa snow bank along with a dead and partially frozen mother and a 6-month child who lay wrapped inside the woman's clothing—still warm and

barely alive.

It had been peacefully snowing for days. Everything was covered with white and seemed to radiate a calm aura. Enjoying the drive to her rural home, the Iowa woman noticed, however, a sudden change in the atmosphere. The wind, which seemed non-existent a few minutes earlier, had become fierce and cold. The even snowfall on the ground whipped and drifted from side to

Illustration cont.

side, making it impossible to drive any further. Panicking, the young mother wrapped her 6-month old child inside of her clothing and started home—attempting to arrive there before the blizzard got worse. But the wind whipped harder and the air became colder.

Losing all sense of direction, she took shelter behind a small grove of bushes and removed her heavy clothing to wrap the child in. Exhausted and numb, she took out of her coat pocket a small pocket Bible and found an underlined text in Rev. 21—“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. . . for the former things are passed away.” No doubt she knew that her death was near, but she found comfort in the Bible promise. I can image her holding the child close, keeping him warm as long as possible.

It is easy to praise ourselves by casually identifying with this story, saying that we too would give our life to save a family member. And I imagine many would. But how relevant is that to you? Would you help your sister clean her room? Would you take out the

trash as a favor for your little brother (or big brother!). Do you look for ways to help ease your parents' responsibilities?

You'll probably never have the opportunity to give your life for a member of your family. But every day you are met with opportunities to make their lives a little easier. It is easy to say “I would gladly lay down my life for my sister” because you know very good and well that you'll probably never be required to do it. But if you're really concerned about being a loving and helpful family member, forget the chivalry and concentrate on being just a plain “nice person.”

God gave the Christian two families—the Family of God and the human family unit. Both of these families are intended to show love, devotion, peace, joy and contentment, reflecting the character of the One who created them. Indeed, we should consider it a blessing as well as a responsibility to be a family member, doing our part to create a concrete unit, and then being willing to sacrifice, if necessary, to protect that unit.

Samuel and Hophni and Phinehas

by Pennie Lister

Families do play an important role in the shaping of their members. But let me ask you a question. How would you explain what happened with Eli's two sons—Hophni and Phinehas—when Samuel was raised in the same household?

Let's consider this by comparing the characters of Eli's sons with Samuel and by comparing the advantages each had. And let's try to determine what made the difference.

Hophni and Phinehas: To put it mildly, Eli's sons were "characters." To put it truthfully, they were a threat to the entire temple service.

"Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial; they knew not the Lord." "Wherefore the sin of the young men was very great before the Lord..." "Nay, my sons; for it is no good report that I hear: ye make the Lord's people to transgress" (I Sam. 2:12, 17, 24).

Samuel: Samuel, of course, was totally different. It probably never even entered his mind to do the things Hophni and Phinehas did. Consider Samuel's attitude.

"And the Lord came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth." "And Samuel lay until the morning, and opened the doors of the house of the Lord. And Samuel feared to shew Eli the vision." "And Samuel told him every whit, and hid nothing from him... And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him..." (I Samuel 2:10, 15, 18, 19).

Samuel was raised in the same environment as were Hophni and Phinehas. But two totally opposite types of behavior developed. Why?

The difference between Samuel and Eli's two sons could not have arisen because of Eli's fatherly influence—because most probably, Eli treated them the same. Too, all three boys grew up in the same and the best home environment. What then caused Samuel to be raised as a holy man of God, when Eli's sons became jeopardies to the temple service itself?

Samuel had an advantage. **"Moreover his mother made him a little coat, and brought it to him from year to year..." (I Sam. 2:19).** Samuel had a loving, caring mother. Though separated from her son at a very early age, Hannah still regarded Samuel as her cherished son. **"Therefore also I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord" (I Sam. 1:28, italics supplied).**

"His mother made him a little coat." Doesn't that seem significant to you? I believe this is why Samuel did not turn out like Eli's sons—"his mother made him a little coat." Not that there is some mysterious power in a little coat. Rather, there is a very practical love revealed in making a little coat. There is a cherishing attitude that says, I want you to be warm and well-dressed. I want you to look your best as you minister before the Lord. Even though we see so little of each other, I want you to know your mother loves you. Samuel had something Eli's sons didn't have. Samuel had a "little coat."

You may be in a family that you consider a bad influence. You may live in a very hostile world and think you have mean parents. But your family's environment does not fix the destiny of your

Logos cont.

family members. *You* can be instrumental in changing their destiny.

Do you worry about a little sister who is becoming involved in some bad things? Find out her needs and try to supply them. Make her "a little coat."

Are you separated by great distance from those whom you long to reveal God's love to? Keep in touch. Remember their birthdays. Do something nice for them that they're not expecting. Make each "a little coat."

Samuel and Hophni and Phinehas had the same father, the same home life, and the same chances to become special people in the Lord's work. But Eli's sons became a disgrace to their society. Samuel became the society's prophet. For someone had taken the time each year to make Samuel "a little coat."

TESTIMONY

Ellen G.
White

Seventh-day Adventists give much importance to the family institution. Perhaps one reason for this is the counsel we have received from the pen of Ellen White. In her many writings she emphasizes the importance of the family unit.

Mrs. White often expressed that in order for families to be successful, there must be a spirit of unity among the family members and a close walk with Christ. "Let fathers and mothers make a solemn promise to God, when they profess to love and obey, that by His grace they will not disagree between themselves, but will in their own life and temper manifest the spirit that they wish their children to cherish. The cause of division and discord in families and in the church is separation from Christ. To come near to Christ is to come near to one another. The secret of true unity in the church and in the family is not diplomacy, not management, not a superhuman effort to overcome difficulties...but union with Christ." *Adventist Home*, pp. 178, 179.

True
unity
comes
through
Christ

Though she wrote repeated warnings against marriage of believers to non-believers, Mrs. White had counsel to those who were living under such circumstances. "In such cases my advice would be: mother, whatever trials you may be called to endure through poverty, through words and bruises of the soul, from harsh overbearing assumption of the husband and father, do not leave your children; do not give them up to the influence of a godless father. Your work is to counteract the work of the father, who is apparently under the control of Satan." In another instance she counsels, "Brother, you have had many discouragements, but you must be earnest, firm, and decided to do your duty in your family and take them with you if possible. You should spare no effort to prevail upon them to accompany you on your heavenward journey. But if the mother and children do not choose to accompany you, but rather seek to draw you away from your duties and religious privileges, you must go forward even if you go alone." "...if you can save only a part of your family, it is much better than to lose all." *Adventist Home*, pp. 348, 352.

Success-
ful fami-
lies need
responsi-
ble mem-
bers

Our lives are greatly influenced by our family relationships. Because the family is an institution created and sustained by God, the family member is instructed to claim allegiance to God alone. This allegiance to God will give him a strong sense of responsibility for the other members of the family. Mrs. White explains this point in *Testimonies*, Vol. 6, p. 119. "Those who hear the last message of mercy to the world should feel it their duty to instruct parents in regard to home religion. The great reformatory movement must begin in presenting to fathers and mothers and children the principles of the law of God. As the law is presented and men and women are convicted of their duty to render obedience, show them the responsibility of their decision, not only for themselves but for their children."

After reviewing what God's messenger had to say about the family, we may conclude two things: 1) We must have a close union with Christ before we can be good family members, and 2) no matter what our position is or circumstances are in our family, we have a responsibility to do all we can to reveal God's loving character to every member.

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Science,
History,
Philosophy

Society is appalled with the repugnant and violent acts of today's youth. "Lock 'em all up" and "Now, when I was a boy..." are upon the lips of many concerned people. Our society must realize, however, that the essence of the juveniles' problems is not found in their delinquency but in a disturbed family life.

Nathan W. Ackerman states, "The family, as a behavior system, stands intermediate between the individual and culture. It transmits through its adolescent members the disorders that characterize the social system." Then, going even deeper into the problem, Ackerman observes, "Fundamentally, what underlies the entire range of disorders is the adolescents' fierce, often failing struggle to *find himself* in this chaotic world. He is searching for a sense of identity, for a sense of wholeness and continuity, in a society that is itself anything but steady in its movement through time." (*italics ours*)

In a society of constant change and confusion, the youth are left to unrewarded searching unless they find in their family the consistency and values needed in the formation of their identity, their very being.

Man is a family-oriented animal. Deprive him of his family and you deprive him of his humanity. As a family fails to offer love and open communication, as it fails to honor and cherish each member, it is depriving that member of some part of the humanity that is his.

Man is
family-
oriented

The following research support these ideas.

Pederson (1966) - There is a significant relationship between father-absence and emotional disturbance in male children. (Also the *mothers* of children where the fathers were absent were found to be significantly more emotionally disturbed.)

Biller (1969) - Father-absence has a retarding effect on the development of masculine sex-role orientation.

Landis (1960) found that the effects of divorce on a child vary a great deal according to the age of the child at the time of the divorce and according to the way the child viewed his relationship with his parents prior to the divorce. The results indicate that the experience of divorce is less traumatic for younger children while those children who perceived home as being happy experienced a greater degree of trauma. A later study by Landis (1962) found that the experience of living in an unhappy home is just as traumatic for children as the experience of living in a divorced home.

Void of a
good
family
life, man
will have
problems

In addition to this, Blain and Carmen in 1968 found that there were more instances of suicide attempts and more suicides among male and female college students from families where there had been separation, divorce, death of a parent or from families of higher educational background.

The juvenile problems in our society are at epidemic proportions. One may try many direct reform measures and they may meet with some success. But in order to **cure** any problems of society, one must go to the very root of the problem, which in this case is the family. Reforms for the betterment of society are futile unless they start with the basic family unit.

Editor: Mark Simmons, you've accepted the task of coming up with a personal reaction to the material in this week's lesson. As a college student, you've probably formulated some opinions on the Christian family, and we'd like to "sound you out" on some specific topics.

First, what about the family's leader? Should one individual be the "head of the family"? If so, who?

Mark: Based upon the Bible, it is my contention that the father is to be the head of the family. He should be the principle provider and play an active part in the upbringing of his children. The wife's paramount duty is to provide for her husband's needs, as it is the husband's duty to supply his wife's needs.

Editor: There are many good Christians in many religions—Christ's "other sheep...not of this fold." They will be saved according to their light. Do you think this allows us to marry Christians of other faiths?

Mark: I feel that the warning against being unequally yoked to a non-believer cannot be stressed enough. It is also important that when it comes to making a choice between serving the rest of one's family or God, one must leave his family behind, even if he has to "go it alone." As emphasized by Mrs. White, each member of the family has obligations and duties to the other members, but his allegiance to God must come first, and it is too often true that contrasts in such supposed "small" things as membership in different denominations, different worship days and different basic beliefs make for disunity in the home.

Editor: We hear a lot, of course, about the effect a working or absent mother has on the family. Are there any statistics which speak about the absent father?

Mark: Father-absence involving children younger than age four has more of a retarding effect on the development of masculine sex roles orientation than does father-absence involving children older than age four. It is a well-known psychological theory that a person's personality is basically set by the time he reaches six to seven years of age. Therefore, it's reasonable to assume that having a role model of masculinity available to a child prior to this age is crucial in order for proper sex role development. Any absence of this role model would tend to have a negative affect on the child prior to this age.

Editor: Let's carry this idea into the divorced-parents situation. What are the effects of divorce on children of different ages?

Mark: The result of Landis' 1968 study indicates that divorce is less traumatic for younger children than for older children. It is this author's contention that the reason for this is that younger children aren't aware that their family's situation is all that different from other family situations. Landis also found that divorce was more traumatic for children who perceived their home as being a happy one, than for those who did not. Perhaps the reason for this lies in the fact that in the unhappy home, divorce comes as no surprise to the children, whereas in the happy home, divorce is a shock to them.

HOW TO

This week's lesson has dealt with the importance of the family and how it shapes our lives. In this section I would like to share some suggestions on what each of us can do to strengthen and improve our families.

1. **Remember that everything you do has an effect on your family.** John Donne had the right idea, "No man is an island..." You see, a family is a system—that is, a group of components, so organized, that one member can do nothing without affecting every other member. This means that each conscientious family member will keep his family in mind as he makes decisions.

2. **Respect the sacredness of the family relationship.** In other words, don't let the whole school know about every family secret you're aware of. There are some things that should be kept private within the family (just as a husband and a wife have certain things which should not become public knowledge). Many "hard times" would be avoided if this rule were observed faithfully.

3. **Look for things to do that will make your family happy.** A happy family is composed of happy individuals, and you can play a big part in making the other members of your family happy. Look for things to do to lighten their work load. Determine to make every member of your family smile each day. Without being silly, try to make them laugh whenever possible. And certainly remember the golden rule.

4. **Talk over family problems as a family.** One thing that encourages unity more than anything else is for one to feel that he is *desperately needed*. Few people ever quit a job if they feel that they are really contributing to it and that they are needed—and the same goes for members of a family. Working out problems together will develop a closeness not achieved in any other way.

5. **Do things together as a family.** Too many children grow up and realize that they don't know their own parents (because they never spent any time together). Determine to spend time with your family. If your brothers and sisters are grown and have moved away, get together as often as possible. When you have a home of your own, continue to support the family your parents raised. A successful family always needs to be supported.

6. **Have family worship and go to church together.** This more than anything else will determine the success or failure of your family. With God as the basis of the family relationship, success is assured.

A successful family doesn't just happen. It is given careful thought, it is cared for, and it is sacrificed for. To have a happy home means to work at it. But it is worth it. There's nothing better in the whole world—and its results are eternal.

To Consider:

1. How close of a relationship should exist between Seventh-day Adventists and their non-Adventist family members?
2. Should you observe the Sabbath in a markedly different manner when you're in the company of those referred to in question 1?
3. Should you change your diet in the above situation?
4. What should one do if, after three years of married life, he discovers that he has made a wrong choice for a life-partner?
5. To what extent does unity (in a family relationship) mean conformity? What areas need unity, and what areas do not require unity?
6. How much time should you spend with a family member who you feel is persecuting you?
7. If you're in a family that won't talk over their difficulties, what should you do?

YOU'RE
NEXT

EDUCATING CHRISTIANS

Objective: To emphasize that as servants of God, we have a responsibility to ourselves to be in an environment that will implant in us the same love for service which Christ desires us to express in our own lives.

March 4 - 10
Editor: Barbara Jeffers



□ March 4
Sunday

Vartija Interviews John

by Seppo Vartija

John is a Christian professional. He lives, breathes, and exhorts the virtues of Christian education. Recently I discovered the reasons why my friend John is so enthusiastic about this topic and I interviewed him for CASSQ to determine why he felt so strongly about it.

Vartija: I understand that you believe that Christian education was the turning point in your life. Would you please

explain?

John: I grew up in a small town in the Northwest. My mother had converted to Adventism when I was attending the local high school. My interests were the furthest they could possibly be from religious values or a Christian education. They basically centered around the local theater, high school dances and basketball games, and the dance band that I performed with.

One day my mother asked

Illustration cont.

me if I would go to the Christian school approximately 200 miles to the north. I told her that I had no interest—I was looking forward to a job immediately after high school, and the last thing I wanted to do was attend a religious school. However, when she promised to buy me a new suit if I would at least try the school for six weeks, I agreed. I told all my friends, however, that I would return in the six weeks' time and not to write me off. I went to the academy, determined to stay only six weeks and then return to my old ways and buddies.

The teachers at the school made a lasting and profound effect upon me, especially the Bible instructor. And his personal interest in me and his exciting and interesting classes resulted in my conversion. My life and my values changed. The goal of service for Christ became most important for me.

Vartija: Is Christian education, then, necessary for all Christian young persons or just for those who are planning a career in the Church?

John: Christian education is important for all Christians because it has what someone has called the effects of **grounding, extending, and conversion**. Basically, this is what happened to me when I was "conned" into going to a Christian school. The **grounding** effect of education is that which one brings to the learning process. The **extending** effect is the continuation of the learning process, which then climaxes in the **conversion** effect, in that the learner adopts new views or values. The Christian college attempts to lead its students through these three processes, climaxing in **Seppo Vartija is business manager of Union College.**

version, which is the acceptance of a new life in Christ.

A study by Alexander Astin entitled *Four Critical Years* suggests that those who leave the church or organization did not attend an environment where the church's beliefs were continually upheld. This has important ramifications for Christian education.

Vartija: Are you suggesting that Christian students who are not in an environment that upholds their values and beliefs will most likely discard these values and beliefs?

John: That is what the study of Astin would suggest to us. Last year here at the college we had a student who was a religious leader and was considered a beacon of light to his fellow students. However, this year for financial reasons he decided to attend his state's university. I understand from his friends that he has little by little lost interest in things that were of common interest to them and that he has also lost some of his religious fervor. Perhaps what Astin suggests would apply in this one particular case. Admittedly, this is not very scientific evidence, as many other factors could apply in this particular case. However, it is something to think about.

Vartija: What are the aspects of Christian education that are most important to you?

John: Christian teachers teach by their example and word a unique value system to those who attend their classes and observe their life styles. These values are different from the world's. The emphasis is upon Christ and His soon return and what Christians can do in order to prepare themselves and others for His return.

“For it is the God who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness’ who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ” (II Corinthians 4:6).

Education is one of the greatest tools used by God in the great plan of redemption. Although education is thought of by many people as merely attainment of knowledge, one must also realize the importance of development of wisdom in the training of youth. (Youth, in this context, includes ages one to one-hundred! Measured against eternity, we’re all young!)

Education = Knowledge. True and permanent education cannot be realized without knowledge, which includes knowledge of the principles of Jesus Christ. **“And for every matter of knowledge of wisdom and understanding about which the king consulted him, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers” (Daniel 1:20).** The training received by Daniel and his companions and put to the test by king Nebuchadnezzar revealed knowledge superior to the magicians and astrologers who in Nebuchadnezzar’s day were considered the summit of all known knowledge and wisdom.

And yet, knowledge without wisdom is incomplete—for, in order that education will result from knowledge, one must also develop wisdom. **“Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom and with all thy getting get understanding” (Proverbs 4:7).** Wisdom should serve as a guide for knowledge.

Therefore we can add another element to the equation—**Education = Knowledge + Wisdom.**

But how is wisdom obtained? Wisdom is a gift all of us possess. The only difference is that some have developed this gift more highly than others. But for those of you who feel you were “shorted” when wisdom was being passed around, there is a promise: **“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him” (James 1:5).**

Therefore, we add still another element: **Education = Knowledge + Wisdom + Love.** Without a love and yearning for Christ, the human heart is not receptive to the teachings of the Holy Spirit. In fact, without love for Christ, the human heart can never be receptive to any of the teachings of true education.

“Call to me and I will answer you and I will tell you great and mighty things which you do not know.”

—Jeremiah 33:3

□ March 6
Tuesday

Thoughts on Education

compiled by Shelley Schurch

TESTIMONY

Ellen G.
White

Study the following Ellen White comments (some of which may at first seem to contradict each other) and try to bring into focus the nature and purpose of Christian education. A few questions may spark your thinking and guide your study: (1) **What is an intellectual Christian? (Am I one?)** (2) **What is sanctified ambition? (Do I have it?)** (3) **How can education be a danger to a Christian student and a hindrance to the work of God?**

"Many have felt, 'Well, it doesn't matter if we are not too particular to become thoroughly educated,' and a lower standard of knowledge has been accepted. And now when suitable men are wanted to fill various positions of trust, they are rare; when women are wanted with well-balanced minds, with not a cheap style of education, but with an education fitting them for any position of trust, they are not easily found. What is worth doing at all, is worth doing well. While religion should be the pervading element in every school, it will not lead to a cheapening of the literary attainments. While a religious atmosphere should pervade the school, diffusing its influence, it will make all who are truly Christians feel more deeply their need of thorough knowledge, that they may make the best use of the faculties that God has bestowed upon them. . . . They will seek constantly to put to the stretch their powers of mind, that they may become intelligent Christians." *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, pp. 117, 118.

"He is a Christian who aims to reach the highest attainments for the purpose of doing others good. . . . Education balanced by a solid religious experience, fits the child of God to do his appointed work steadily, firmly, understandingly. . . .

"God does not want us to be content with lazy, undisciplined minds, dull thoughts, and loose memories. . . . He has given us talents, and has made it possible for us to acquire more, in order that we may be able to help ourselves and others onward in the way to life" (p. 119).

"Ignorance will not increase the humility or spirituality of any professed follower of Christ. The truths of the divine word can be best appreciated by an intellectual Christian. Christ can be best glorified by those who serve Him intelligently. The great object of education is to enable us to use the powers which God has given us in such a manner as will best represent the religion of the Bible and promote the glory of God" (p. 45).

"The proper regulation of his habits of eating, sleeping, study, and exercise, is a duty which every student owes to himself, to society, and to God. . . . That student who is studying hard, sleeping little, exercising little, and eating irregularly of an improper or inferior quality of food, is obtaining mental training at the expense of health and morals, of spirituality, and, it may be, of life" (p. 72).

"Too great devotion to study, even of true science, creates an abnormal appetite, which increases as it is fed. This creates a desire to secure more knowledge than is essential to do the work of the Lord. The pursuit of knowledge merely for its own sake diverts the mind from devotion to God, checks advance along the path of practical holiness, and hinders souls from traveling in the way which leads to a holier, happier life" (p. 338).

Christians should be intelligent

Education must be well balanced

Too much "knowledge" is impractical

Shelley Schurch is a housewife and graduate student in Lincoln, Nebraska.

EVIDENCE

Science,
History,
Philosophy

Some exciting work has been going on in California by humanist psychologists. Men such as Rogers, Maslow, and Otto say that **We use only a very small portion of our capabilities**, and that there is an enormous untapped potential in every human being—so much so, that it isn't outlandish to say that if we really desired to fly, we could fly! We could have an ability to touch that would be so spectacular that we could actually feel color! We could have the ability to see better than an eagle, the ability to smell better than a bird dog, and a mind that could be so big, it would constantly be full of exciting dreams. **And yet we are perfectly happy to be only a small portion of what we are.**

We can
be more
than
what we
are

The London psychiatrist R. D. Lang, in his book *The Politics of Experience*, states, "What we *think* is less than what we *know*: what we *know* is less than what we *love*: what we *love* is so much less than what there *is*; and to this precise extent, we are much less than what we are" (italics supplied). Knowing all of this, we should have the tremendous desire to *become*, in the fullest sense of the word.

Ellen White tells us that every human being has been created in the image of God and has been endowed with a power similar to that of the Creator. This power is not only an intellectual power, but also a spiritual power which exists in every human being. Cooperation with our Creator, therefore, will bring about changes that are "higher than the highest thought." Now, that's power—to accomplish feats, dreams and desires that are higher than either you or I have ever thought of!

This is the beautiful difference between Christian education and secular education—to train men and women to tap that power-source of creativity. To accomplish this, God has given the Christian a philosophy for education which calls for "the harmonious development of the physical, the mental, and the spiritual powers through communion with the mind of God!"

Christian
education
gives man a
handle to
become
more

The Scriptures tell us that we are called forth to be kings, to be heirs together with the King of kings. We are to be royal priests, telling of the sacrifice of our Saviour throughout all the universe for eternity (Romans 8:14-17). What a calling! What a training process! To think that the destiny of the Christian will be to proclaim the wondrous love of Christ throughout eternity and to be kings and priests unto God and actually share Christ's throne in ruling the myriads of planets with Him (Rev. 1:6; 3:21; 5:10). Training for this royal line is what Christian education is all about: to prepare the Christian for this fantastic calling. Education is part of the plan of salvation to restore in man the image of his Maker and to bring him back to that perfection in which he originally was created.

Thus we can see that the work of education and the work of redemption are one. The principles stand unchanged for they are the principles of the character of God. To prepare the Christian's life for a deeper relationship with Christ and to fit him up to be joint heirs of the King of kings is a thought that is higher than you or I can ever imagine. To follow this philosophy combines the scientific, the practical, and the ideal.

Of Cars and Education

by Dr. Bill Hemmerlin

I bought a shiny new car some years ago. The color was beautiful—a brilliant blue. It was sharp—it had a vinyl roof and wide tires. I loved it! I wanted it to last forever, always looking just as nice as the day I bought it. I vowed to provide the best maintenance and care. Unfortunately, however, I thought that the only important thing was keeping it washed and waxed, and maintaining optimum pressure in the tires. I ignored “minor” items, like regular tune-ups, oil changes, and lubrication. And you can guess what happened: in less than a year the chassis began squeaking something awful, and not long after that, this lovely creature would hardly start in the morning, would stall pitifully at intersections, and would make unearthly hiccupping noises when I tried to shut it off.

In this case the story is apocryphal (of course, some people *do* treat their automobiles in this manner). But tragically, this is the same philosophy some people follow in their own life-styles and in the raising and educating of their children.

Can you imagine sending a child to school, but only allowing him to take mathematics? What will that student know after eight, twelve or sixteen years of education? You see, what we have been studying in this week’s lesson is really just good, logical common sense. But then, God’s plans are always logical and sensible, when we understand the purpose.

God created us as multi-dimensional beings. Ellen White says that true education is the harmonious development of these dimensions, i.e., the physical, mental, and spiritual powers. (*Education*, p. 1). What better method and philosophy of education is there than one which believes that an individual’s physical, mental, and spiritual powers are interdependent?

If I want my car to function at optimum efficiency, I will see to it that all systems (not just surface things such as the paint and tires) are cared for regularly as described in the owner’s manual written by the manufacturer. So it is with us. If a human being is to achieve his greatest potential in life (starting now and continuing throughout eternity), he must give regular attention to each dimension of his life: physical, mental, and spiritual.

And if one is stressing the development of one of these dimensions to the exclusion of the others, he will not achieve all that God desires for him. To expect to grow intellectually by ignoring one’s health and spiritual condition is silly. To expect spiritual growth and salvation while defiling the temple of God (and when you think of it, ignoring the body is defiling it) and failing to develop intellectually is ludicrous.

Most school systems do not provide this heaven-ordained, balanced approach to education involving the whole man. God’s educational system does!

True education develops the mental, physical and spiritual harmoniously

“Proper maintenance” comes through Christian education

We often hear it quoted that "salvation is the work of a lifetime." But **education** does not seem to receive that long-range emphasis, and so we tend to feel that while we are getting our schooling, salvation can wait. After one's education is complete, however, a tendency exists for him to let the educational process slip and re-emphasize salvation. This is an unnecessary tragedy.

It seems that there are at least four places where the processes of salvation and education are similar. Let's consider these four areas and learn how to combine the processes of education and salvation in our day-to-day lives during the college years.

1. Be interested in a subject. Choose a course of study that you find interesting and one that you would enjoy working at. You can best make this choice if you have had positive contact with someone or something in that field. Many students spend summers or after-school hours working in an area that broadens their view of their field of interest.

Likewise, if you are to gain an interest in salvation, you must see that positive benefit will result from that interest. It is important to expose yourself to the positive elements so that you will not be swayed by heresy or negativism. Salvation has long and short range benefits and these should make you interested in it.

2. Be committed to a goal. A choice of an educational goal or a lifework is made because it appears that there will be a positive benefit from attaining the desired goal. So, when you have decided what your goal in life is, then get after it. Be committed.

Spiritually, the goal of righteousness has already been met for us by Christ. It is our responsibility then to decide whether or not we want to accept the fact that He has met the goal. And then, to take the effort—Bible study, prayer, personal experience—to know the One who met it so that we can be supporters of *His* goals for humanity.

3. Be willing to study. As a student, you must decide how much effort to spend in your educational pursuits. Some may choose to stop after college, others may want to go beyond. But whatever the case, do your best. And in terms of education, this means that you must *study*. Don't let anyone pressure you into accepting yourself as an average student. You can be at the top—if you study.

Spiritually, you must also study. You must study in order to know God, yourself, and other people. There are numerous Christian authors you may study and benefit by, but the Bible is certainly at the top of the list.

4. Be willing to share what you have learned. No matter what educational pursuit you follow, if your knowledge isn't shared, it will quickly fade.

Spiritually, it's the same way. If Christ is in the heart, but His words and character are not expressed, your experience with Him will also fade.

"The true object of education is to estore the image of God in the soul." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 575. Let's determine to make our college years an educational process that does just that; one that unites the work of education and salvation.

To Consider:

1. If a person needs to get through with college as soon as possible, is it necessary that he has as balanced an education (physically, socially, spiritually) as the person who takes five years to get through? If so, how can he?
2. Adventist schools have a definitely homogenous environment. In a heterogenous world, are our schools very practical?
3. Should Adventist schools try to recruit non-Adventists? Explain your answer.
4. Do you think our school system pretty well meets God's standards? If not, where are we lacking?
5. If you were to establish a Christian college, what would be your primary considerations?

WORSHIPPING GOD

Objective: To show how God wants man to worship Him.

March 11 - 17
Editor: Barry Bacon



□ March 11
Sunday

Worship Unveiled

by Barry Bacon and
Shelley Dickinson

It was a Sabbath day. Sitting in my favorite front pew, I admired the beauty of carved and polished wood and the stained glass windows. The inspiring sermon was enhanced by a melodious choir and a well-phrased prayer.

But when the service was over, the talk and laughter of people in the lobby disturbed me. Did they find it as empty and meaningless as this? Troubled greatly, I went to my home, but I found no peace. At last I went to my bed and fell into a fitful sleep.

Suddenly an angel stood beside me, lighting the room with his brilliance.

"Come," he said.

He took my hand, and instantly we were back in the church again, and there in the sanctuary—to my surprise—the same worship service was again being conducted.

I watched as we sang the hymns, as the deacons took the offering, and as the minister preached. Yet it was all so strange, because although the congregation's lips moved and the organist touched the keys, I heard no words and no music.

"I don't understand," I said. "Why is there no sound?"

"You are viewing your worship as God sees it," the

Illustration cont.

angel answered.

"What do you mean?" I asked. "Why is our service silent to God?"

"God has stopped His ears so that He does not have to hear your worship," he answered grimly, "for it is an abomination to Him."

"What?" I exclaimed. "Why does God stop His ears, so that He cannot hear our prayers to Him, and our praise?"

"Because of the sins of the people," he said, "for they have turned God away by their sins."

"Sins?" I asked. "What sins? These are God's people, His chosen people! What have they done?"

"Come with me, and I will show you something," he said.

He took me to a house across the street from the church, and we gazed into the large living-room window. At first it seemed a holy place in which to live—there was a Bible upon a table and a large bookcase filled with religious works: concordances, Bible dictionaries, testimonies from God's servants.

But no one was using them. A small family was gathered in a reverent circle at the far end of the room, their faces lit by a strange blue light, their mouths opened in grotesque and discontented laughter, their eyes trained upon sinful acts, and their ears buffeted by coarse language and obscene stories.

It seemed that I could hear their thoughts as they laughed. "We truly are Christians, for God wants us to be happy, and we are indeed quite happy."

The angel said, "Son, do you see what the children of God are doing?"

"Yes," I said, and I was ashamed.

"Come with me," he continued, "and I will show you something else."

He took me to a dormitory of God's school, where there was a tiny blemish in the wall. He said, "Dig with your hands, so that you can see and hear what God's people are doing."

I dug and made a small opening through which I could see. There in the dormitory room, a group of students were gathered. There was loud whispering followed by quick, rapid laughter. They were talking of evil things, telling licentious stories and jokes such as people of the world tell. Grimacing, I turned my head from the scene, and as I turned, I thought I heard one say, "Don't worry. God will always forgive us, for He is very merciful. There is plenty of time for repentance."

I turned away. I wanted to cry, but my heart was too heavy for crying.

Then the angel lifted me up above the city and all around I saw scenes of filthiness and abomination and sin. I saw but a handful of God's people weeping and praying for those around them.

Then I looked down at myself, and I saw that my own clothes were also dirty and covered with blood. I could bear it no more. I fell on my face, and cried, "Sir, how can we be made clean? Is there still forgiveness for God's people? How can we be right with God, so that our worship is acceptable to Him?"

Touching me gently, the angel turned my face to his and, whispering softly, said, "I have yet another place to show you."

Illustration cont.

Leading me to a small, almost run-down house, the angel instructed me to peer into a small window toward the rear of the house.

As I looked, I beheld a man, worn with age. Furrows of concern remained upon his forehead. He appeared at first to be all alone, kneeling, with tears on his cheeks, his lips silently moving.

But as I watched, I saw hovering about him many angels, and yet another Being whose kind features were touched with sympathy. This man of kindness had

his arms about the aged, weeping man and spoke to him tenderly. Looking up with steadfast trust, the old man's haggard face took on a glimmer of hope and his words became audible to all those around as he communed with his Lord.

Quietly I turned from the scene. The angel was gone—but within my heart was peace. For my worship no longer depended upon preachers and hymns and offerings, but upon me and my Lord.

David viewed worship as both an *attitude* (a process that cannot be observed directly) and an *overt act* (a process that can be directly observed). He declared **“let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker” (Ps. 95:6)**. The *attitude* of worship—“let us worship”—precedes the act of worship—“let us kneel.”

Since an attitude is defined as “a state of readiness to act in a particular way,” a positive worship attitude impels the person (if he has internalized this attitude) into a relationship with God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. This relationship manifests itself either by an overt act or by a mental “posture of acceptance.” For example, Isaiah says that people will decide to **go up** to the house of God (an overt act), whereas David comments, **“Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee” (Ps. 119:11)**. (Notice the positive attitude which results in a relationship.)

How you relate to the Godhead is not necessarily determined by geography (**where** we worship) or splendor (the ceremony and display of worship). An outward manifestation doesn’t prove that your worship is acceptable. However, a positive relationship with the Godhead is confirmed by **“a broken and a contrite heart” (Ps. 51:17)**.

Worship is a positive attitude—and an **emotion**—within your soul which joins you in a relationship with God through word and deed. As Ellen White says, “we are not merely to feel that we have to thank God for and what we owe to Him, but to express it also in word and deed.”

God can be worshiped anywhere, of course, regardless of geography, but genuine corporate worship occurs in the house of God where the principles of love and goodness unite to create the atmosphere of heaven. We are invited to come to His house to strengthen our relationship with Him by being there in His special presence, by making a joyful noise unto Him by verbal expression, and through fellowship with each other. **“Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto Him with psalms” (Ps. 95:2)**. It is in the church building that the congregation, as a unified body, meets the Godhead. It is here that the atmosphere of heaven may be experienced—for if the members of the congregation possess the principles of the character of Christ, angels will unite with them in worship.

Worship is an attitude and an overt act

A worshipful attitude is basic

Acts of worship are responses

The atmosphere of heaven is found in worshiping at church

The Spirit leads us to worship

In 1908, Ellen G. White wrote that true worship "is the fruit of the working of the Holy Spirit."¹ She says, "Those who worship God must worship Him in 'spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him.'"²

To worship we must be born again

If it is the Spirit, then, who prompts us to worship, let us see what the Spirit, through the Spirit of Prophecy, will lead us to think regarding worship and the attitude we should have about it.

"The religion that comes from God is the only religion that can lead to God. In order to serve Him aright, we must be born of the divine Spirit. This will lead to watchfulness. It will purify the heart and renew the mind, and give us a new capacity for knowing and loving God. It will give us willing obedience to all His requirements. This is true worship."³

Worship gives strength

"We have abundant reason to maintain a fervent, devoted spirit in the worship of God. We have reason even to be more thoughtful and reverent in our worship than had the Jews. But an enemy has been at work to destroy our faith in the sacredness of Christian worship."⁴

"It should be a pleasure to worship the Lord....He desires that those who come to worship Him shall carry away with them precious thoughts of His care and love, that they may be cheered in all the employments of daily life, that they may have grace to deal honestly and faithfully in all things."⁵

We should "Come in humility with a heart full of tenderness"⁶ and should conduct our worship "with consistency, unity, and sound judgement."⁷

What can we learn about worship from our ultimate example, Jesus Christ?

"Jesus had come to teach the meaning of the worship of God."⁸ Read the chapter entitled "In His Temple" in *The Desire of Ages*. Jesus "could not sanction the mingling of human requirements with the divine precepts"⁹ in the place dedicated to the worship of His Father.

Christ's whole life was an act of worship

There is another chapter in *The Desire of Ages* that describes an aspect of worship we may sometimes forget. It is the chapter entitled "As a Child." You will find in reading this chapter, as in reading the rest of the book, that the sum total of Christ's life was an act of worship to His Father. This can be our experience, too: "We must live for Christ minute by minute, hour by hour, and day by day; then Christ will dwell in us, and when we meet together, His love will be in our hearts, welling up like a spring in the desert, refreshing all, and making those who are ready to perish, eager to drink of the waters of life."¹⁰

1. *Review and Herald*, November 19, 1908
2. *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 50
3. *Testimonies to the Church*, Vol. 9, p. 159
4. *Testimonies to the Church*, Vol. 5, p. 497
5. *Steps to Christ*, p. 108, 109
6. *Testimonies to the Church*, Vol. 1, p. 397, 398
7. *Testimonies to the Church*, Vol. 5, p. 270
8. *The Desire of Ages*, p. 84
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Testimonies to the Church*, Vol. 5, p. 609

EVIDENCE

Science,
History,
Philosophy

Every culture that has ever existed on the face of the earth has spent a substantial amount of time engaging in a seemingly unproductive activity—that of worship. From a logical point of view, the effort expended to worship is wasted energy. It does not result in a tangible product that we can consume to further our physical existence. Yet to question the fact that we worship is an academic endeavor; worship continues regardless of efforts to explain away its usefulness. Therefore we must conclude that it does have a reason for existing, that it fills a void. But in what way? What void does it fill?

An eminent psychologist named Maslow developed a “hierarchy of needs” which defined his concept of what the needs of a human are, and in what order they must be satisfied. The initial needs are physical, and Maslow hypothesizes that a human being will strive to satisfy these needs—such as hunger, thirst, and protection from danger—first of all. Once these needs are satisfied, the human will then attempt to satisfy the higher orders of urges, such as social status and intellectual stimulation. Maslow identifies the need to worship as a higher-order need that is ignored until physical needs are fulfilled.

Maslow:
Worship is
a higher-
order need

Yet if our need to recognize and worship an entity superior to ourselves is secondary to our pursuit of physical needs, why is much of the activity of primitive cultures centered around their worship of a “god”? Their physical needs are many times not satisfied, **yet their intellect cries for submission to a higher power, whatever they perceive that power to be.** The need to worship can take priority over our physical needs, and as a Christian I would submit to you that when our need to worship is satisfied, our other needs, physical and higher-order, are put in the proper perspective. Our God *does* fill a void and *can* give our existence meaning.

Taggart:
Worship is
the pri-
mary need

A young student came to a wise man and earnestly inquired the best way to gain knowledge. Pondering his request for a moment, the wise man suggested they take a walk. As they were passing by a river, the wise man beckoned to the student to come to the water's edge. While the student was contemplating his reflection in the water, the wise man grasped his head and held it under the water. The student struggled for air and at last was let up. When he had regained his breath, the wise man said, “When you need knowledge as badly as you just needed air, you will find it.” Let's pray that our worship brings us to struggle for a closer knowledge of God and His saving grace.

Editor: Monday's lesson mentioned that corporate worship occurs "in the house of God; it is in the church building that the congregation... meets the Godhead." How do you feel about this, Dennis?

Palmer: During Paul's ministry, church buildings primarily were not established. Believers met in people's homes, or even outside in nature. We find Jesus ministering to others in a boat, in lonely places, in crowded places such as towns, in the synagogue, and by the seashore. Instead of placing the emphasis on a special place to worship like the Jews did, Christians were told that they themselves were the temple of the living God (II Cor. 6:15). God resides in the life of each believer.

Editor: One of the ideas in Tuesday's lesson was that after we live each minute, hour and day of our life for Christ, "then Christ will dwell in us." What do you think about that?

Palmer: How can this be? How can we do anything good or live for Christ if Christ is not already dwelling in us? The expression of Christ dwelling in a person or for one to be "in Christ" is used invariably and without exception when speaking of believers. "If anyone be in Christ he is a new creation" (II Cor. 5:17). It seems to me that the order should be reversed. Christ dwells in us, and then because of His presence, we live for Him.

Editor: I am sure, of course, that this is what Mrs. White was saying. She says in *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 206, "If you take even one step toward Him in repentance, He will hasten to enfold you in His arms of infinite love... Even before the prayer is uttered or the yearning of the heart made known, grace from Christ goes forth to meet the grace that is working upon the human soul."

Wednesday's lesson, as we noticed, challenged Maslow's hierarchy, which ranks our human "needs" from the lower to the higher levels of development. It noted that worship can be more important than some of our physical needs. What is your opinion on this?

Palmer: This type of reasoning seems to be right on target with modern research. Hal Lindsay, in his book *The Terminal Generation*, mentions that a man can go without food for about 40 days, without water for three days, without air for 8 minutes, and without hope, one second. Worship, even if it is on the primitive level, seems to give man hope, and in this it seems to be much more important than even the basic physical needs.

HOW TO

Worship is more a matter of attitude than of place, more a bowing of the heart than of the knees, more a building of a relationship than a keeping of scheduled appointments. With this in mind, how can we achieve this in a **practical** way in our church services? In dealing with the actual church service there are three parts to be considered: our attitudes and actions **before**, **during**, and **after** the service.

1. Before church it is really necessary for you to get a good night's sleep. You cannot appreciate church when you are dead-tired. It is important to eat a good breakfast so that your stomach doesn't distract you at about 11:30 a.m.; this also keeps your blood sugar up to the right level, and could keep you from getting a headache. If you can think of something that is separating you from your fellow-man and God, try to get it solved so that it doesn't bother you and keep you from concentrating on the service. Pray that God will prepare your attitude and mind for the coming service. Now, come seeking a blessing, and expect to find one!

2. During church it is important to remember that worship is active, not passive—participation, not entertainment. Pray for the Holy Spirit to be present in the service. Here are some ways:

a. Tune your thoughts on God. Stay away from conversation that would take your mind off God. This may mean sitting with a friend who **listens** during the service instead of one who gives a running commentary on other people's clothes, new cars, who's dating who, etc.... This may mean avoiding the "Restroom Committee meetings"—those happy little get-togethers where hair, clothes, "Did you see who I saw...", and this type of conversation is quite popular.

b. Actively take part in the service. Open your hymnal and sing. Instead of daydreaming, try thinking about what you're singing. The words really may express something you feel or know, and if they do, sing them as a prayer to God, or as a celebration.

c. Give an offering and pay your tithe. These are God's ways of letting you share in His work and letting you love others. Tithes are a reminder that God loves you and takes care of you. There is no need for you to worry; trust Him! They also keep you from getting selfish. Give cheerfully; it is a privilege.

d. Listen to the sermon. You've prayed for a blessing, now search for it. The Holy Spirit will guide you. I've never failed to find some blessing when I've prayed for one. When prayer is said, don't just kneel there wishing it would all be over. Listen to the prayer, make it your prayer too, and pray along with the speaker. Open your heart!

e. When the service is over, don't drop your "bundle of worship blessings" at the front door as you go out. Rather, take it with you. Guard your conversation and attitudes (even out in front of the church).

3. Carry your worship with you all through the week.

Get involved with people in as many ways as possible. Serve them as Jesus has served you. Love them as you are loved!

God is your friend; take Him with you everywhere. Your relationship with Him will guide your worship. Thus, worship *can* and *will* be a beautiful and meaningful part of your life!

To Consider:

1. I can't help it, but I find worship boring. The sermon is as dry as the hills, and I get nothing from the whole service. What can I do?
2. Why do we need corporate worship? Can't I worship God alone in nature? After all, Enoch worshipped God so well—alone—that God took him.
3. What does God want to accomplish by having his people build large, expensive churches (such as the beautiful temple of Solomon)? What is God's criteria for building a church?
4. What actually constitutes true worship?
5. I live in a big church. I know how to play the piano and sing, but nobody knows that I can do these things because I never get a chance to perform. What can I do?



COMMUNICATING GOD

Objective: to understand that one of the best and most eternally valuable services we can perform for those around us is the introduce other people to the One we serve, and to tell them of the possibility of their eventual salvation.

March 18 - 24

Editors: William and Diana Cole



□ March 18
Sunday

Louise

by Carolyn Wisbey

'... for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see thee hungry and feed thee, or thirsty and give thee drink? And when did we see thee a stranger and welcome thee, or naked and clothe thee? And when

did we see thee sick on in prison and visit thee?' And the King will answer then, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me' (Matt. 25:35-40 RSV).

I watched Louise answer the door as I was standing outside waiting to give her a Bible study. She was 6'2", 350 pounds, bearded, toothless, smelly, and sometimes mentally unstable. As I walked in I noticed the living room consisted of two double beds,

Illustration cont.

several chests of drawers, a couple of kitchen chairs, many miscellaneous stacks of things, and lunch and supper leftovers mixed with garbage all over the floor.

She said she was interested in studying the Bible. She was a willing subject for me to witness to. Her heart was tender. She was tearful at times. She liked to read her Bible with us. She enjoyed our friendship and conversations about general things. She talked about improving her living conditions.

Thinking of the above texts, I made an appointment with Louise to bring some of my friends over to do some heavy cleaning in her house. Just a day before we were to come, she called and canceled—no explanation given. Her voice was firm and distant.

After a few Bible studies

Louise's attitude was different than it was at first. She had not studied her lessons; there was no talk any more of wanting to clean up, and she lashed out at me when I suggested she might work harder at housekeeping. The studies were canceled.

Months after, I am wondering what all I did wrong. Was I casting pearls to swine or sowing on rocky ground? Was I emphasizing the wrong points? I have no solution to this story; there is no happy ending; the problem has not been resolved.

One of the best and most eternally valuable services we can perform for those around us is to introduce others to the One we serve, and to tell them of the possibility of their eventual salvation. This is what I was longing to do for Louise. Where did I fail?

Children of God have always witnessed

To share God's love with others by our speech and behavior is a *response of man to God* which is as old as the world itself. Adam continually sought to witness to his children. Faithful Enoch, **"the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all..." (Jude 14, 15).** Noah warned his neighbors of impending judgment (2 Pet. 2:5), and so did Abraham and the prophets. Isaiah speaks to us saying, **"Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he" (Is. 43:10).**

Christian concern is the greatest witness

Thus, witnessing for God is not merely a product of the New Testament but is something that has always been with God's people. And rightly so, for witnessing is living the experience we have enjoyed with God before those about us. We might witness brilliantly to others *about* God, but if we do not really care and love them it is all of no use (1 Cor. 13). The greatest witness that any of us can have is being a caring, loving person. **"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:35).**

However we must also note the element of active witnessing. Listen to Paul as he speaks to Titus: **"These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority" (Titus 2:15).** And in Acts 5:20 we read the direct command of an angel, **"Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life."**

Teaching about Christ is important

There is also Jesus' express command: **"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations...teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Mt. 28:19-20).** Indeed, Jesus considered witnessing as important work, and Paul says that our witness can be the power of God which causes salvation (1 Cor. 1:18).

If man lives **"by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God,"** then this command of Jesus must be obeyed. And, as with all His commandments, this particular one is designed for *our* good as well as for others'—we will benefit as well as they.

TESTIMONY

Ellen G.
White

Age doesn't matter to God. We are never too young to serve Him and our youthful vigor is actually an asset. Youth is a time of life and vitality, a time when we can reach many, simply because we're energetic and unstoppable.

"The Lord has appointed the youth to be His helping hand." *Testimonies*, vol. 7, p. 64. "Teach the youth to try in a quiet, unpretending way to help their young companions." *Gospel Workers* p. 210.

God has a mission that demands our cooperation and attention. We are to go into all the world and teach them of Jesus. It is truly a valuable service to introduce others to Christ. "He who becomes a child of God should henceforth look upon himself as a link in the chain let down to save the world, one with Christ in His plan of mercy, going forth with Him to seek and save the lost." *Ministry of Healing*, p. 105.

"In order for us to develop a character like Christ's, we must share in His work. In order to enter into His joy, — the joy of seeing souls redeemed by His sacrifice, — we must participate in His labors for their redemption." *The Desire of Ages*, p. 142.

Your character and actions are scrutinized by many people. **You are being watched!** What does your life reveal?

"Let us remember that a Christlike life is *the most powerful argument* that can be advanced in favor of Christianity, and that a cheap Christian character works more harm in the world than the character of a worldling." *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 21.

"Our influence upon others depends not so much upon what we say as upon what we are. Men may combat and defy our logic, they may resist our appeals; but a life of disinterested love is an argument they cannot gainsay." *The Desire of Ages*, p. 142.

The life you live, the experiences you've had, the future you long for can help others, but you must be willing to share these things with them. "Our confession of His faithfulness is Heaven's chosen agency for revealing Christ to the world . . . That which will be most effectual is the testimony of our experience . . . These precious acknowledgments to the praise of the glory of His grace, when supported by a Christlike life, have an irresistible power that works for the salvation of souls." *The Desire of Ages*, p. 347.

"Tell them how you found Jesus and how blessed you have been since you gained an experience in His service. Tell them what blessing comes to you as you sit at the feet of Jesus and learn precious lessons from His Word. Tell them of the gladness and joy that there is in the Christian life. Your warm, fervent words will convince them that you have found the pearl of great price. Let your cheerful, encouraging words show that you have certainly found the higher way. This is genuine missionary work, and as it is done, many will awake as from a dream." *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 38.

As we reach out in love we can be missionaries for Christ in every aspect of life. Love is a driving power and the number-one directing motive. It has endless potential — remember what it has done in *your* life. "If we would humble ourselves before God, and be kind and courteous and tenderhearted and pitiful, there would be one hundred conversions to the truth where now there is only one." *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 189.

Witnessing youth can be unstoppable

We are links in God's "salvation chain"

Not what we say but what we are

Our testimony is the most effectual

Reach out in love

Charles Beeler is communications and public affairs director for the Central Union.

There are many sources of light in the world and in the universe. Light from these sources becomes known and, in one sense, useful to us only if it is intercepted and converted into a visual stimulus within the brain. Light has traveled uninterrupted from that source. Light which has been intercepted in some way by some object may also contain information about that object as well as the source. It then becomes impossible to tell which information describes the source and which was later added by the object.

Not all objects placed in a beam of light change it in a bad way — they may be transparent, like lenses. Over the years optical craftsmen have learned how to make mirrors, lenses, and prisms to change light into useful, beneficial rays, producing bright clear images of the source. These men spare no pains in rendering the glass and its optical surfaces **as perfect as possible** in order to minimize distortion and maximum transmission of the original light beam.

But once it is made, a perfect mirror or lens or prism is of no use unless it is placed in the beam and positioned properly. Once it is placed there, though, even a child can look at it and discover its basic purpose, and some facts about the light source itself soon become very understandable. Let's discuss each of these devices in detail.

**Mirror:
to reflect**

A mirror's sole purpose is to reflect light which falls upon it. It must have a smooth, highly polished surface with maximum light transmission, because bumps and scratches in the surface will show up as distortions to the observer, and will cut down the intensity of the reflected light beam.

**Lens:
to focus**

Light passes through a lens to a focal point. To form a sharp image at this point, all the different colors of light must focus at exactly the same place, or the image formed will be blurred. Again, imperfections in the glass cause distortion. But when the lens is well-made and properly used, the observer at the focal point can see the light **more clearly and with greater intensity** than he could without the lens' aid.

**Prism:
to disperse**

Light passing through a prism is not brought to a focus, but is spread out. However, this "dispersion" is not random — each color of light comes out of the prism in a different, but **specific and predictable** direction. These colors are separated into an organized, rainbow-like spectrum, and provide the observer with a striking view of detailed beauty of a light beam, not visible without the prism. A true spectrum of colors in the light source can be observed, however, only if **two** conditions are met. **First**, all stray light from other sources must be shielded from entering the prism. **Second**, the prism must be free from impurities that will absorb some particular colors from the source beam.

Light has often been equated to the truth about God that He has directed toward this sinful world. Let's use that parallel here. Further, equate yourself — a Christian witness — to the mirror, the lens, and the prism, and the one in need of seeing Christ more clearly. Are you allowing Christ to polish away your imperfections and distortions so that you can allow only the true Light to shine through you to produce a perfect image of the Source?

OPINION

It is the Christian's duty to share what he knows about God. In Matt. 28:19, Christ gave the great commission to "go and make disciples of all nations." This is the Christian's mission. This command of God is as binding as the Decalogue. Yet, sadly, there are very few Christians who take their commission seriously enough to tell their teachers, employers, and neighbors about the God they know and the faith they have.

Is it possible that Christians do not fulfill their divine commission to evangelize the world because they do not understand the reason for it? For instance, psychologists generally feel that the criteria for judging whether or not a person's religion is healthy is by looking at its effect upon his life. They would suggest that it doesn't matter if one's religion is Christianity, Judaism, or Hinduism as long as religion enhances life and promotes growth. Why then should the Christian seek to convert the Buddhist, who may be perfectly happy with his religion and life-style? Why rock the boat? Why seek to convert a neighbor to a religion that may cause him to lose his job, wife or friends, when he seems already to be happy? Carefully consider the following statements in answering this paradox.

"Man is a freak within nature. Animals simply live their lives until it is not longer possible. They do not wonder whether it is worth it. Man needs reasons for living, and if there are none, he begins to die. Man not only needs reasons for living; he also needs more than animals, to learn how to live, how to survive and prevail in the world where he is born."¹

For millennia religion has provided man with reasons for continuing to live when living became difficult. Paul Tillich states that religion provides man with the definition of ultimate concern and value.² According to S. M. Jourard man is incurably religious. What varies among men is what they are religious about.³

The Christian would accept these ideas but must go another step if he is to have any basis for evangelizing the world. The Christian must believe that his religion will foster growth of his powers and enhance his life more than any other religion. He must believe that being taught about Christianity will increase a person's likelihood of being eternally saved. Thus, to introduce others to the God we know and serve is one of the best and most eternally valuable services that we can render them.

Why evangelize?

Man needs reasons for living

Religion gives reasons

The Christian religion gives more reasons

1. Jourard, Sidney, *Healthy Personality*
2. Tillich, Paul, *Systematic Theology*
3. Jourard, Sidney, *Healthy Personality*

Jesus did not say "Ye are my witnesses" (Isa. 43:10) to the stranger who knew Him not; He spoke these words to those who knew Him. A witness in a courtroom, for example, testifies to what he knows. Christ's witnesses know Him; they accept the salvation which He gives them as a gift, and they love Him. They love Him so much that it shines out in their homes, in the classroom, on the campus, everywhere. It is a *total experience* affecting everything they think and do and say. They cannot be neutral or silent. Their cup runs over, and the overflow blesses all those whom their lives touch. They are not like the young man who, when asked if he had any difficulty in living up to his religious beliefs when he was in the military service, replied, "No, not at all. They didn't even know that I was a Seventh-day Adventist!"

Christ is our example, and here are some specific ways in which we can follow in His footsteps:

1. Pray for the Holy Spirit.

Christ Himself received the Holy Spirit at His baptism, and when our lives are changed through our acceptance of the love of Jesus, we too should seek to be filled with His Holy Spirit. Then we will yearn to carry the story of His redeeming love to others.

2. Follow in Christ's footsteps.

Christ walked every where, and into the presence of every class of people. If we are to truly follow Him, our footsteps will take us not only to the brilliant minds and the clean, well-dressed, responsible citizenry; they will lead us also to the miserable, vile, unlovely sinners. His footsteps will take us to the poor, the needy, the lonely. They will take us to our families and neighbors, our classmates, friends, and acquaintances.

3. Pray that God will show you how and where you can best serve Him.

All persons are not given the same talents, but to each of His servants Christ gives a work to do. "Not more surely is the place prepared for us in the heavenly mansions than is the special place designated on earth where we are to work for God"—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 329.

The real follower of Christ is a loving, caring person who shares his faith in the glorious appearing of the Lord Jesus when He comes to take His faithful ones home with Him. How can he show his love? Some can by preaching, but not every person can preach. Some can teach, or care for the sick, or work with the underprivileged, with children, with other youth, or with the aged. Many testify of their love of God through their musical abilities, their writings, their special abilities in personal evangelism, their business dealings, their friendliness. Every Christian witnesses by his life attitudes, his response to duty, his speech, his choice of associates, the use he makes of his time and his money. The list could go on.

Let me remember always that my daily life broadcasts a loud message. Am I as a college student doing all I should to introduce others to the Saviour whom I love and serve and whom I want to know Jesus, too, so that all of us can greet Him soon when He comes again?

To Consider:

1. Must we wait for a visible, vigorous outpouring of the Holy Spirit before we can effectively witness?
2. What specific steps should we use to interest others in our religion and our God?
3. Read question 2 again. Now, focus it in this dilemma: Let's say you're an evangelist, about to begin planning an evangelistic series in a big city. You're writing a newspaper ad; you're preparing for a radio or TV spot. What do you say that will really and honestly speak to the hearts of the people you want to attract?
4. Here's the hard one: List the steps in salvation, and if possible, give accompanying texts.
5. Continue the line of thought in question 3. You're an evangelist, and your first four nights have brought out only eight Adventists—**no** non-Adventists. Should you keep preaching? Or should you shake the dust off your feet and continue elsewhere?
6. What is your most effective means of witnessing?

DOING THINGS LIKE GOD DOES

Objective: To show that good works are the Christian's loving response to what he sees that Christ has done and is doing for him; that fruit bearing is a matter of being connected to the vine.

March 25 - 31
Editor: Kendra Brown



□ March 25
Sunday

Mrs. Brown

by Mary Olson

“Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? Let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom” (James 3:10, 13).

She was so busy that afternoon—why did students always come with so many questions? She had paced herself carefully so as to finish her work a little earlier

than usual. The school was having some special meeting on how to help students. She was looking forward to attending.

“Oh, no! There’s John again with another of his questions,” she thought, a slight frown clouding her face.

“Mrs. Brown, where can I get these special forms?”

“Check with my reader,” she said, trying to be patient, yet knowing her chances of finishing work early were diminishing by the minute.

Illustration cont.

"But, can't I buy them here in this office?" John persisted.

"Check with my reader," she repeated again, irritation making her cheeks turn a shade pinker. Her reader could answer the question as easily as she could.

"But do you sell them here?" John questioned resolutely.

"Check with my reader, dimwit!" she fairly shouted with exasperation. John withdrew. The hot humiliation did not show too noticeably on his stunned face.

Finally the day's work with its endless questions was over and she hurried to the meeting. She really did want to get some new pointers on how to help students.

Now, before we pick up our stones for a good throw at Mrs. Brown, an introspective look might be in order. Because it is not so difficult to be busy preparing for the future good works, that the right now—everyday little deeds and words—lose their significance.

Life is chiefly made up, not of great sacrifices and wonderful achievements, but of little things. It is often through the little things

which seem so unworthy of notice that great good or evil is brought into our lives (*Ministry of Healing*, p. 490).

James 1:26 says, "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain."

Mrs. Brown, like the rest of us, is a struggling Christian. We want to do "good works." We want very much to show Christ we love Him and appreciate His love and care for us. But so many times it is hard to conceptualize the admonition to bear good fruit in the form of kindness and patience and love when it's an irritating roommate or impossible teacher or student that we have to deal with.

Mrs. Brown loves her students, but like us, she can only produce the fruits of the Spirit by a daily close connection with Christ, the vine. Self sufficiency and pride in our good works disappear with the realization that even being able to do good works is a gift from God.

Let each one of us take hold of the promises of God, so that we will produce good fruit in our words and acts.

A person who is confronted with the beauty of the gospel message most often feels convicted of sin and sorry for his misdeeds. He desires forgiveness and the gift of eternal life. In prayer he presents himself to God and is covered by the Saviour's life, and in joy finds himself accepted as a son of God.

But, does Christ, having claimed one more soul from Satan's power, now turn from him to the business of finding another new follower, or is there something more to be done for His new son? Does the new Christian now go on his way rejoicing, and without further responsibility, still living the old life?

Jesus left no doubt concerning the responsibility of the new Christian. To one new convert he said, **"Go, and sin no more"** (John 8:11). To the self-satisfied Pharisees he said, **"Bring forth fruit meet for repentance"** (Matt. 3:8). In short, His instructions were: **"Stop sinning; start doing good things."**

But knowing the weakness of the carnal heart, Jesus promises help with this new life. **"I am the vine, ye are the branches; He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing"** (John 15:8). When we are connected with Christ—like a vine is to a branch, fiber by fiber—we will have His strength to do His will. For indeed, the life of the vine becomes the life of the branch. Our weakness unites to His strength, our frailty to His might.

The Christian's new life brings happiness to himself, and gives glory to God. **"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven"** (Matt. 5:16). Many in this world judge the Christian's life and make their decision concerning the kingdom of God on the basis of what they see. The one who has pure religion will be found **"visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction"** (James 1:27) and doing other acts of love. **"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another"** (John 13:35).

It is interesting to note that God, though He knows the thoughts and intents of the heart, judges man by his works. **". . . the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works"** (Rev. 20:12). How would you reconcile this text with one in Eph. 2:8, 9 which tells us, **"By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works lest any man should boast?"**

I believe that when we have accepted salvation, God judges Christ, in our place, for we are covered by His life. But love, naturally expressed in works to God and man, is the glue that holds this covering upon our lives. Loss of works shows the loss of love. If that "love glue" is gone, the covering of Christ slips from our lives and we are judged by what shows.

However, having accepted the righteousness of God as our own and lovingly doing His will, the Lord has made provision for bountiful rewards. Listen:

"He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper" (Psalm 1:3).

"And the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever" (Isaiah 32:17).

Connected
with God
we have
His power

Christians
should
"start
doing
good
things"

Right-
ousness
brings
blessings

TESTIMONY

Ellen G. White

In this part of the lesson, Mrs. White gives insight on the relationship between loving God and doing good works. When considering this crucial topic, keep two questions in mind:

- (1) What should be my motive(s) for doing righteous acts?**
(2) Does God want me to do only those deeds that are sponsored purely from a heart of love, or does He want me to do some things regardless of what my depth of love for Him is?

“Our acceptance with God is sure only through His beloved Son, and good works are but the result of the working of His sin-pardoning love.”¹ “Good works can never purchase salvation, but they are an evidence of the faith that acts by love and purifies the soul. And though the eternal reward is not bestowed because of our merit, yet it will be in proportion to the work that has been done through the grace of Christ.”² “Righteousness is right doing, and it is by their deeds that all will be judged. Our characters are revealed by what we do. The works show whether the faith is genuine.”³

Good works are evidence of our faith

“It is God’s will that faith in Christ shall be made perfect by works; He connects the salvation and eternal life of those who believe with these works, and through them provides for the light of truth to go to all countries and peoples. This is the fruit of the working of God’s Spirit.”⁴ “Genuine faith will be manifested in good works; for good works are the fruits of faith. As God works in the heart, and man surrenders his will to God, and cooperates with God, he works out in the life what God works in by the Holy Spirit, and there is harmony between the purpose of the heart and the practice of the life.”⁵

“Many are losing the right way, in consequence of thinking that they must do something to merit the favor of God. They seek to make themselves better by their own unaided efforts. This they can never accomplish. Christ has made the way by dying our sacrifice, by living our example, by becoming our great High Priest. If by any effort of our own we could advance one step toward the ladder, the words of Christ would not be true. But when we accept Christ, good works will appear as fruitful evidence that we are in the way of life, that Christ is our way, and that we are treading the true path that leads to heaven.”⁶

Salvation only through Christ

“God always demanded good works, the law demands it, but because man placed himself in sin where his good works were valueless, Jesus’ righteousness alone can avail. Christ is able to save to the uttermost because He ever liveth to make intercession for us. All that man can possibly do toward his own salvation is to accept the invitation, “whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely” (Rev. 22:17).⁷

So then it is clear that “Good works do not purchase the love of God, but they reveal that we possess that love. If we surrender the will to God, we shall not work in order to earn God’s love. His love as a free gift will be received into the soul, and from love to Him we shall delight to obey His commandments.”⁸

1. *SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, pg. 1122
2. *Desire of Ages*, pg. 314
3. *Christ’s Object Lessons*, pg. 283
4. *Testimonies*, vol. 5, pg. 644
5. *Selected Messages*, book 1, pg. 397
6. *Selected Messages*, book 1, pg. 368
7. *Selected Messages*, book 1, pg. 343
8. *Christ’s Object Lessons*, pg. 283

When we focus upon the basis of all good works—the life of Christ, seen in terms of what He has done for us and what He is continuing to do now—we may find ourselves somewhat perplexed over the place of human effort in the production of those works with which heaven is pleased. Is ours a totally passive role? Do we simply **let** the fruit grow in much the same way as we **let** the light of Christ shine in our lives?

No one seems to believe that our lives can be endowed with good works unless there is an appropriate element of human effort. But lest this be perceived as some thread of human devising which mars the perfect robe of Christ's righteousness, some quickly note that human effort is only admissible if it is seen as wholly directed at turning the perverse human mind to Christ. The daily striving of the Apostle Paul was essentially directed at a contrary will which refused to allow Jesus to motivate and empower him to do good works. All human striving then is a negation of human achievement and an affirmation of the fact that Christ must do it all. Once the stubborn will has been badgered into submission to Christ, the rest is easy. Christ works in us to do His good pleasure.

There are others who see human effort as especially dangerous to theological purity if it enters into the divine-human relationships at the beginning of our walk with God but apparently less dangerous once the walk has been begun. From this perspective the matter of our total acceptance by God must be absolutely without any consideration of what we have done. The logic of this is supported by the argument that if it were otherwise our salvation would rest in part at least upon an imperfect base, since all human endeavor is flawed by human limitations.

Good works come naturally to the Christian

A generally accepted model is as follows. Jesus as our Saviour invites us to come to Him. If we will but focus upon Him—accept His perfect life as standing in the place of our own—and live in communion with Him, then good works will flow naturally from this relationship. A cautious approach avoids the suggestion that appropriate attitudes and behavior will flow automatically or irresistibly when the life is properly centered in Jesus. If the Christian's total surrender to Jesus is equated with total passivity on his part, then the question of individual identity may be blurred, what is meant by strength of character may become confused.

Man remains a purposive being who must choose among options and strive for the realization of his objectives after becoming a Christian. Commitment to Christ does not immediately purge all perverse sentiments, leaving the soul free to venture forth innocently in any direction. He does not wait for some type of divine unction (anointing) which comes upon him with compelling force and moves him irresistibly toward goals of the Lord's choosing.

Christians resemble Maslow's self-actualized person

The good works which are seen in the Christ-centered life may bear some resemblance to many of the characteristics of the self-actualized person as described by Abraham Maslow. According to Maslow, the self-actualized person accepts himself and others, and has little guilt, shame or anxiety. He concerns himself primarily with problems which are outside of himself. He has a certain independence from local customs and is not unduly influenced by his environment. He identifies and sympathizes with others, and has affection for them. He respects people

EVIDENCE

Science,
History,
Philosophy

Evidence cont.

irrespective of their birth, race, blood or family. He enjoys his work. He is blessed with creativity, being expressive, spontaneous and perceptive in everyday life. He is ever open to new experiences.

Faith that works by love is not a passive thing. **It is a joint endeavor where the secret of success is the combination of divine power and human effort.** The method of divine guidance and hence fruit bearing seems to have undergone a transition from the days when it was acceptable to seek a sign in the fleece, or by some form of lot, or when answers came via the Urim and the Thummim. God would have His followers understand the principles involved in the decisions to be made and to choose courses indicated by these standards. With their eyes turned upon Jesus, they seek in His strength to fill their lives with good works which is the path to true self-actualization.

I don't like to be ignored. Don't misunderstand me; I'm not asking to be the star of every show, the life of every party. In fact, last winter when I tripped over a crack in the sidewalk and fell, ripping open the knees of my slacks, I limped home as casually as possible, hoping to escape attention on the way.

That was an exception, though. Usually I welcome smiles, greetings, conversation—the warmth of other human beings acknowledging my existence. Without this recognition I feel empty, lonely, and lost.

For many years I took it for granted that God was ignoring me. I didn't blame Him. The Bible said, "God so loved the world" and I knew I was only one insignificant person in that world of millions of people. Besides, there were countless other worlds. God had to spread His love and attention rather thin. God was busy.

How does the Holy Spirit help a person who has a warped idea about God? I suspect He has an infinite variety of ways to work with us, since we were created as individuals with unique characteristics, and are always treated as such by the Godhead. I do know how the Holy Spirit helped me.

One evening as I read about Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, struggling with the temptation to save His own life rather than to offer it as a sacrifice for the human race, I became personally involved in the story. For the first time in my life I realized it was true that Jesus would have died for only one sinner, even if I had been that sinner. He wasn't interested in numbers alone; but He could love millions of people in such a way that each one had all His love and attention.

When I believed "God so loved **me**" I immediately wanted to do three things: I wanted to thank Him, I wanted to become like Him, and I wanted to tell somebody else what I'd discovered.

Aren't "good works" involved in all three of those responses? For me, then, "good works" are my responses in a certain kind of relationship. I once was a distant admirer of God; I became a close friend. I feel like doing anything I can for a good friend, but this friendship is unique. God not only inspires me with love and willingness to "do good works," He also gives me the ability to do them. He makes them probable and possible, but the choice of relationship is always mine. I can ignore God, or I can recognize His hunger for my love and respond with my full-hearted friendship.

HOW TO

Before we tackle this apparently simple topic, we had better define what it means to do good works. We hear this phrase all the time, but what does it really mean? Maybe a story will help to illustrate:

Years ago, an experienced farmer planted an apple seed and anxiously waited for it to grow. He cared for the small seedling and nurtured it along through the stages of growth. He waited patiently and lovingly, and then one day it happened—the apple tree blossomed! And when fall came, the apples ripened to the peak of perfection; the tree bore fruit!

That's nothing really startling, of course—it happens in orchards all the time. But let's take a look at this story and see if we can pull some ideas on "good works" from it. We'll put them in the form of "how-to-do-it" steps.

1. Learn what good works are, and learn from reliable sources. Notice that the farmer was experienced—he **knew** what to do. He'd no doubt studied an orchard manual, and he had probably subscribed to one or more gardening magazines. In our case, the Holy Spirit and the Bible are the reliable sources. The Bible tells us what good works are (visiting the widows and fatherless, helping the poor and imprisoned and sick, dealing justly and mercifully with everybody), and the Holy Spirit helps us to naturally want to bring forth these fruits—love, joy, peace, and so on (Galatians 5).

2. Perform these specific actions for the other person's true present and eternal good. Notice—at the proper time, the farmer planted the seed. He did what was necessary in every way for the future "good" of the plant. He placed it at the proper depth in the soil, and tried to protect it from death. *Anything we can do* which will further the true present and eternal happiness of our friends will fall under the category of "good works."

3. Evaluate yourself periodically, checking your motives. Some people do good works so they will be "seen of men," like the Pharisees. Like the farmer kept constant watch on the tree, keep constant watch on yourself and the reasons you're doing what you are doing. The farmer, of course, has an ulterior motive, if you want to call it that—he'll get money for his crop when harvest time comes. Our motives, of course, should be different—we sow the seed, God gives (and eventually receives) the increase. But we actually get some of the increase ourselves as we see our friends and others of our acquaintance warm to our kindnesses.

It's that simple—learn and keep learning what good works are, perform them for others' true present and eternal good, and keep watching your motives so that they're pure.

To Consider:

1. If we aren't supposed to do good works for rewards, why are so many rewards for the righteous mentioned in the Bible?
2. Should we do our good works openly, so that others can profit by seeing how a Christian should behave, or should we do them in secret, and deny others the benefit of our example? Explain your answer.
3. How can we make sure that we're doing good works for the right motives? Are there any specific action steps that we can perform which will prove to us that our good works are properly motivated? Must we merely depend on faith for this?
4. Should our good works be totally motivated by the Spirit—in other words, should we wait for the Spirit's moving to do them, or is there anything wrong with looking around and seeing if we can be of some help?
5. Is there a chance that my good works may grow stale to me because I don't often associate with the type of person who is selfish and hates to do good works? How can I remain refreshed and anxious to do good things?



FINDING JOY

Objective: To show that true joy and happiness come from knowing and serving Jesus.

April 1-7
Editor: Denise Shultz



□ April 1
Sunday

Glass Houses

By Jo An Shultz

Don and Sally live in the city of Il'Uision. They own a beautiful, glass-like house filled with expensive glass-like furniture. They wear exquisite garments purchased from the Glass Menagerie — the store with the latest fashions. Why, no one would dare be seen dressed in something besides an original "Fancy." They drive a Phantom 88 super sports car.

Many citizens work in the Castle Building complex, located in the center of the city. Don and Sally are also employed there. They hold responsible positions and are moving up in the ranks of a

new visionary enterprise called V.E.R.V.E. All day they sit at very large desks inventing and fabricating new designs for future "glass" products, "Fancy" originals and Phantoms. No figment of their imagination goes unnoted, for the more figments they make, the more notes they receive at the end of the week. They use these notes to purchase bigger and better "glass" homes, furniture, quadraphonic sound systems, Phantoms and, of course, the latest "Fancy" fashions.

Often Don and Sally go to the Utopian restaurant after work to unwind. The Utopian

is also constructed of glass-like material, as is the whole city, and at night the artificial lighting makes this "glass" city look like a giant, glittering fantasyland. Every sensual luxury — gourmet food, liquor, the latest films, live entertainment and much more — is always found at the Utopian. When at last Don and Sally have used their last note, they get into their clear-as-glass Phantom 88, listen to crystal-clear quadraphonic sounds and drive home. Once home, they curl up on their 2,000-note bug-a-bear rug in front of their fire and drift into restless reverie.

So it has been for as far back as they can remember and so, they thought, it would always be.

Then, a man named Michael came to town. One evening he stopped by Don and Sally's 'glass' home. He began talking to them about joy and peace.

"There is no lasting joy or peace to be found in Il'U-sion," he said. "Your possessions which you work so hard for will soon be worthless. Soon every possession you regard so highly will completely fade away."

Worthless? Fade away? Like a thunderbolt, this idea struck deep within both Don and Sally. For some time now, they had experienced an uneasiness, a growing discontent. This they discussed with Michael.

"One afternoon," began Don, "after leaving the Castle Building, neither of us could remember where we had parked our Phantom and we had to call Mr. Demonus, the Mayor. He can always see that which is lost."

"He told us we must have a slight case of a rare eye disorder called Truth," con-

tinued Sally, "but he said it was nothing to be concerned over because he was naturally immune and would always be able to see for us. Once he even had to find our house for us!"

Michael looked sober. Don and Sally's eyes were opened. They became very frightened as they began to realize the extent to which they had been deceived. They saw clearly now that they were spending their lives working for things that were not really there — but glass-like illusions. But the stranger's words gave them hope.

"There is another city," he said, "one called Re:Ality, where peace and joy are eternal, where that which you once considered real is gone and what you once could not see is real. The houses are built out of love for one another. The objects of importance here are the knowledge of and the wisdom that comes from the Master Workman — and He is the Mayor of this city. You will wear garments fashioned out of His virtue. You will not need a Phantom 88 or 98 or 2008. You will travel by power given to you by this Mayor. All the citizens of this city are my very close friends."

Don and Sally determined to deepen their relationship with Michael. Thus, they took their first step on their journey to the city of the Master Workman and the everlasting happiness of mind and body which comes only from Re:Ality. The light of a new day was just dawning.

As Michael got up to leave, he said, "While you are still in Il'U-sion you will use the things of this city, but when the things of the two cities are in conflict — then your

Illustration cont.

priorities will dictate which you will choose above the other. And, this choice in turn will determine your ultimate joy and happiness and peace.”

“I will write many letters to encourage you on your journey. But now, my peace I leave with you. In Il’Uision you will have tribulation; but, be of good cheer, I have

overcome Il’Uision. Let not your hearts be troubled, I will come again and take you all the way into my city. Keep your eyes fixed on me and you will always be able to distinguish illusion from truth. **In me** you will have peace, and my joy will be in you so that your joy might be full.”

joy (joi) n. (ME. joic (OFr. (LL. gaudia, orig. pl. of *L. gaudium*, joy (IE. base* gau-, to rejoice, whence Gr. *gethein*, to rejoice, Mlr. *guaire*, noble) 1. a very glad feeling; happiness; great pleasure; delight 2. Anything causing such a feeling 3. The expression or showing of such a feeling ---vi. to be full of joy; rejoice--vt. (Archaic) 1. to make joyful 2. to enjoy ---See pleasure.

Through our relationship with Jesus Christ, we are supplied with many sources of joy. God loves to see His children happy; He's not a gloomy or despairing God. He rejoices in providing us with large and small blessings of joy and encouragement - such as **recovery** and **reunion**.

RECOVERY

One source of joy given us by God is the gift of **recovery**. True joy is experienced when a friend who has been seriously injured or is very ill, has recovered. This joy applies equally, if not more so, with spiritual healing and recovery.

"And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spoke, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed. And there was great joy in that city" Acts 8:6-8.

"... what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it? And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbors together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I have lost" Luke 15:8, 9.

REUNION

Another gift given us by God is the gift of **reunion**. True joy is experienced when a reunion takes place between close friends. We have been supplied with the capacity to love and care for others. When one experiences a happy reunion, he should remember that this is God's way of showing us how wonderful it will be when we are reunited with Jesus. In John, Jesus explains that although we are filled with sorrow because of His departure, we will be filled with a great joy at His return.

"Verily, verily I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish for joy that a man is born into the world. And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you" John 16:20-22.

Our final joy will be actualized on that glorious day when Jesus presents us faultless before the throne of God. Our joy will be beyond human expression. **"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy"** Jude 1:24.

Recovery and **Reunion** are great sources of joy for the Christian. They are infinite sources of joy, for the Supplier is Himself infinite. Through a living relationship with Him, we can always know true joy and happiness deep in our hearts.

One thing we don't often think about is that love for God and doing His service produces real joy of heart, mind and body, and that the desire to serve is one of the "laws of life." "All things," says Mrs. White, "both in heaven and in earth declare that the great law of life is a law of service." *Education*, p. 103.

"My job is boring . . ." If service is to bring joy in mind, why do so many people who are in God's service consider their tasks dull drudgery? Mrs. White states that if a worker resents his duties, he cannot be classified as a true servant of God. "The true workers do not regard it (work) as a drudgery. They are ready to spend and to be spent, but it is a cheerful work, done with a glad heart. Joy in God is expressed through Jesus Christ. Their joy is the joy set before Christ—'to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work' John 4:34." *Positive Christian Living*, p. 368.

"My mind seems always fatigued . . ." Why, if service for God is a joy, does one find so many worn out and run down Christians? Mainly — this is because we aren't willing to allow the loads on our backs to be placed upon the broad and strong shoulders of Jesus. "As you commit yourself to His service, He will be at your right hand to help you. Day by day you will be strengthened and ennobled." Isn't that a wonderful thought? For, the more we depend on Christ and are willing to let Him help us, the more able we will be to help our fellow man.

When one considers the fact that love for God and serving Him makes a joyous heart, isn't it amazing how many Christians worry about doom, destruction and despair? A true follower of Jesus who happily performs his Christian service will seldom dwell on the destruction in store for the wicked. Instead he will let his mind dwell on the love of Christ and His forgiving nature. It is not necessary to be a 'somber' Christian. "There is nothing gloomy in the religion of Jesus. If Christians give the impression by a mournful attitude that they have been disappointed in their Lord, they misrepresent His character and put arguments into the mouth of His enemies. Though in words they may claim God as their Father, yet in gloom and sorrow they present to the world the aspect of orphans." - *Mount of Blessings* p. 88.

A concerted effort on the part of us as Christians to allow the service we do for God to produce a joyous spirit in our hearts, minds and bodies, will prove to the world that we are indeed sons and daughters of God - *and not orphans.*

TESTIMONY

Ellen G.
White

EVIDENCE

Science,
History,
Philosophy

At the heart of the Great Controversy lies the claim that serving Jesus will not result in our greatest happiness. It is the purpose of this week's lesson to show that this claim is false; that true happiness can be fulfilled only by the love of God and anything apart from this can end only in sorrow.

One of the areas that spells out the benefits in following God's plan is the science of the body. Our bodies respond radically to our care and our neglect. God has given us rules to follow for the proper care of our bodies. It must be stressed here, however, that following these rules will not result in a closer relationship with God, but if we follow these rules we may better fit ourselves to grow in that relationship.

This subject may be talked about in theory but to help us understand more clearly, examples may be used. One example common to most Seventh-day Adventists is the use of sugar. Have you ever wondered why it is easier to catch a cold when you eat foods with a high content of sugar? The higher the amount of sugar in your blood, the lower your white blood cell action is. And your white blood cells are what your body uses to fight infective diseases.

Another example can be found in the use of alcohol. Of course, alcohol has many detrimental effects on the body. Physiologically, it depresses the part of the brain that controls compulsive behavior, judgement and memory. It causes body heat to leave rapidly, which contributes to digestive disorders and can increase fat deposits in the body. Profuse alcohol consumption depresses the appetite, resulting in severe vitamin deficiencies and many resulting diseases.

The human body, while it is prepared to care for impurities, will soon become susceptible to infectious diseases when these defenses are worn down by continual combat with the poison — alcohol.

Only recently is science discovering these and many other dangers resulting from going contrary to God's law. If anything, this should be proof enough that service to God in the form of obedience to his health laws will result in happiness — true happiness in mind and in body.

Everything that God tells us is for our benefit! Every time we are confronted with any temptation, we should tell ourselves that our God of love knows and tell us us what is for our best. This is the part we play in the Great Controversy — to have faith in God by believing everything He says is for our greatest happiness.

Following
God's plan
leads to
happiness
- as seen
in exam-
ples:

Sugar

Alcohol

Trusting
God
brings
happiness

The desire for security is one of the main motivations for our behavior. We do those things that make us feel secure. We don't do those things that make us insecure. In fact, a man will live only as he has security and support. When he can't find these, he dies.

In this age of instability and rapid transitions, where in this world can a person find security?

I believe Jesus showed us where to find total security in His discussion of the vine/branch relationship. He said, **"I am the vine . . ."** (John 15:5). **I am your support. I am your strength. I am your source of nourishment.**

Security
only in
Christ

Now, how many vines does it take to support a branch? How many trunks does it take to support a limb? Then, how many sources of security does it take to support the Christian?

"I am the vine." You see, we cannot trust in our families for our support. We cannot trust in just the best situations to bring us security. We cannot even trust in the church or its doctrines to supply the support and security that we need. The Christian has one source of strength — he finds security in only **one** place — and that is in Jesus Christ. **He** is our only vine.

When one trusts solely in Christ to meet all of his needs and to fulfill his dreams, then he may lose his family, his friends, his health, and still be totally secure, for he will always have Christ. Indeed, heaven and earth can pass away, but while we maintain a close relationship with Christ we can never feel threatened or insecure.

Now, what does this have to do with joy? Simply this. Security, total security in Christ, is the only source of joy. For what man can be unhappy when he's resting secure? Or who can be happy while he feels threatened or insecure? Only the person who abides in Christ can feel secure; thus, only the Christian can have true joy and happiness. When we maintain a close relationship with Christ, we can always have security — and true joy.

Security
brings
joy

Christ
became
insecure
for us

Only once in His life was Jesus insecure and was thus lacking true joy. "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46). The second death that Jesus died was gross insecurity. Separated from His Father, He who, "can of mine own self do nothing," died. Jesus lived as long as He had security in God. He died when His Father withdrew His support.

But the good news is that Jesus, on the cross, became insecure so that the Christian might always be secure. Thus, Jesus, on the cross, became very unhappy that the Christian might always have joy.

Truly, while we maintain a close relationship with Christ we can always have security — and true joy.

HOW TO

The popular belief these days is that you must serve yourself and work for yourself in order to achieve happiness. It states that you will go nowhere, and do nothing significant unless you do all you possibly can to achieve your goals (using either honest or dishonest means.) This lesson is intended to show you how to achieve happiness and true joy while bypassing man's procedure and elevating God's.

Human nature demands recognition. Of course, we all like praise for the work we've done. But the concept I want to discuss is this: **true joy and happiness can be found when we forget ourselves and humbly serve God.** Consider the following steps in finding joy by serving the One we love.

1. Make a list of your talents. This step sounds quite easy. It is, however, more difficult than it appears. First of all, sit down with a piece of paper and list all of your talents you are aware of. Then, add those you feel you could develop with a small amount of work.

Now sit back and study the list you have just completed. After studying it, write beside each talent a way you could put it into use in your everyday life. Look at each talent and think of it in terms like this: Can I use this talent to help others? Can I use this talent to give God more glory? Can I use this talent to spread the gospel? These are just a few suggestions, and I am sure that you can think of many more questions to ask: One important rule is this: be honest! This is your own personal list and no one else will see it. Underestimating your own talents can be, and is, dangerous. That is one of the great deceptions used by Satan. He really would like us to believe that we are capable of less than we actually are.

2. Apply these talents. Unlike the first step, this is actually easier than it seems. Using the list of talents and being in a situation in which you could make use of them, just start doing them. You will be surprised to discover how many new situations will arise where you can use these talents in situations that you never even thought of while you were completing step 1. One positive thought is this: If you do have difficulties in speaking before others, praying about others (yes, that is a real talent) or whatever your particular talents may be, rest assured that with time, they become easier and easier until they are practically second nature.

3. Practice humility. This step, of course, requires "unlearning" many of the rules of survival we have acquired in the process of growing up. Many people, even the majority of people, feel that real satisfaction can only be found in recognition. **This is not true.** The greatest happiness, peace and satisfaction is realized when we claim nothing, absolutely nothing, for ourselves. This, of course, will take lots and lots of will power at first, but as you realize the results, it becomes easier and easier to give God the glory. Because after all, your glory is His Glory. He made you, and gave you your inherited and developed talents.

Now, try these three steps for an *extended* period of time, not just a couple of days or weeks. Try them until you see results. And the results you see should be great joy and happiness.

To Consider:

1. Yes, I serve God, but I don't feel very happy about it. Why? What can I do?
2. How do you define joy? Joy of mind? Joy of Body?
3. If happiness doesn't come through the "ways of the world," why is it that there are so many apparently happy people in "the world"?
4. Why does God care if I'm happy or not?
5. Why should I care if other people are happy?
6. Read Ps. 35:27, 132:9, 32:11, 5:11. Under what conditions would shouting be a correct expression of joy today? What about clapping your hands? (II Kings 11:12; Ps. 47:1).

YOU'RE
NEXT



